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THE

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD,

SUBJECTIVELY CONSIDERED.

BEING

THE SECOND PART OF THEOLOGY

CONSIDERED

AS A SCIENCE OF POSITIVE TRUTH,

BOTH INDUCTIVE AND DEDUCTIVE.

BY

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TO

ALL WHO FERVENTLY DESIRE LIFE AFTER DEATH,

THIS TRIBUTE OF SYMPATHY AND LOVE

IS OFFERED

IN THE NAME OF THE SAVIOUR OF SINNERS,

WHO HAS ABOLISHED DEATH,

AND BROUGHT LIFE AND IMMORTALITY TO LIGHT THROUGH THAT GOSPEL,

WHICH IS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION

TO EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH.

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A FEW PRELIMINARY WORDS.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY; PROGRESS, TRUE CONCEPTION, SCIENTIFIC STATEMENT.

During the first seven centuries of the Christian Church, the attention of Theologians, so far as we can judge, seems to have been directed chiefly to the establishment of the claims of Christianity as the true religion of God, and to the establishment within the Church itself of the fundamental truths of that religion. By the end of that period, and after innumerable conflicts, the doctrine of the Church everywhere, seems to have been fully settled and confirmed by the decisions of general councils, concerning God and concerning Christ; and in the West, at least, settled also, very generally concerning man. But these—God, Man, and the Godman, are the grand elements of the science of Theology; and when they were settled in the faith of the Church, that science ought immediately to have risen, and, resting upon divine truth, to have passed steadily and rapidly to its perfect state. Instead of this, we have in the Western Church a period of eight centuries during which scholasticism in its rise and predominance is the most conspicuous manifestation of thought, down to the outburst of the Reformation of the sixteenth century. The Schoolmen interpreting the religion of Jesus by the Philosophy of Aristotle, as their predecessors of the Alexandrian school had interpreted it by the Philosophy of Plato; added, it may be allowed, to the stock of inquiry and speculation, much that deserved the consideration of posterity; but they added almost nothing to Theology, considered as the science of the knowledge of God unto salvation, whether as to its conception, the method of its proper treatment, or its practical development. Considered from the point of view of Reformed Christianity, scholasticism was a complete failure.

In this state of things that great awakening occurred, which we call the Reformation; which was connected with the past by so many streams, which combined in one movement so many powerful influences, which delivered to the future the seeds of so much that was glorious. It was an awakening of the Church of God to the spirit of its primeval and only true life; and it manifested itself in the reception and love of divine truth,

and by consequence in true faith and true holiness. The scientific treatment of Divine truth, therefore, followed the movement of the Reformation, more closely than it had followed the movement of the first planting of Christianity. In the Latin Church, the spirit and the method which had predominated during so many centuries of fatal error remained, and still remain; for to have shaken them off would have been to share in the revolt which emancipated the Reformers, the dread of which gave so strange an aspect to Ancient Theology, and exercised such fatal influence upon the speculations of the Schoolmen. In the bosom of the Reformation a division in the conception and treatment of Theology as a science, manifested itself from the beginning and has continued. In Protestantism, these diverse conceptions have been called, accurately enough, the one material, the other formal: the one grounding everything in a particular aspect of Divine Truth—the doctrine of Justification by Faith, for example; the other grounding everything in the sum of the whole truth revealed by God. The former conception, however true in particular, is altogether too narrow, altogether incomplete, as the conception of a science so vast. The latter conception—that of the Reformed strictly so called—was just. From it, the Reformed Theology ought to have developed itself, firmly and at once. The Church had not only recovered the position she occupied at the end of the seventh century—but had taken a great step in advance.

That the Reformed Theology did not adequately avail itself of its great position, nothing can prove more clearly than that after three centuries, the first attempt—that of Calvin—retains its supremacy. Augustine, even with his strange conception of the Papal Church, finds no name to match him—till Calvin. And Calvin's great work—which I had no small share in restoring to general circulation—though it is arbitrary in its method, and though abstract, practical, and controversial Theology, truth objective, subjective, and relative, are mingled confusedly throughout it; has no rival amidst the hundreds which have followed it. I attribute this failure of the Reformed Theology to develop itself completely as a perfect science, to the imperfect conceptions which these very defects signalize. It failed to conceive adequately what that science is, which is the sum of all revealed truth. It failed necessarily after that failure, to conceive adequately the method responsive to the true conception of that grandest of the sciences. It failed necessarily after these two failures, of adequate breadth of spiritual insight into the divine proportion of that truth, which was itself the very substance of the whole science of Theology. Whoever is willing to survey with candour, the whole field of scientific Theology, abstract, practical and controversial—Latin, Lutheran, and Reformed—since the Reformation was firmly established and its first fruits gathered; will see small cause to be satisfied that the Critical, Speculative,

or Philosophical methods of the ages which have succeeded that great period, are to be preferred to the arbitrary and artificial method they would supplant, or perhaps even to the best specimens of the scholastic spirit which the Reformation overthrew.

Is there, then, no natural method, whereby Theology planting itself on the grand foundation which the Reformers obtained three centuries ago, may develop itself as a science of positive truth? It may be true that Theologians have always felt obliged to confess to themselves, that the Knowledge of God attainable by man, was in some vague sense a true science—nay, the highest of the sciences. Manifestly, they were obliged to see that whatever Knowledge of God man does obtain, must be obtained by some means or other which are answerable to the faculties of man; and all of these have designated the Word of God as one of these means—while all the orthodox have held that Divine Word to be the chief means, and all the Reformed have held it to be the only infallible means. But all this militates nothing against what I assert, nor against the importance of it. What I maintain is, that seeing the Knowledge of God is attainable by lost men unto salvation, seeing that the sources of this knowledge are few, precise and capable of exhaustive demonstration: it follows absolutely from these data, that the Knowledge of God unto salvation must be in the strictest sense—a science. And then as soon as those few and precise sources of knowledge are exhaustively demonstrated, it follows absolutely that the kind of science proved, is one of positive truth, both inductive and deductive.

It may also be conceded that all Theologians have been obliged to see, that some method or other must always be resorted to, by every one who will teach anything, or acquire anything, worthy to be called scientific knowledge. But it is nevertheless true, that they have to a deplorable extent, failed to observe that any particular method lay in the very nature of this divine science itself; failed to observe that the Revelation of divine truth, and the divine operation of truth in the human soul, followed any particular method; failed to observe that any particular method of teaching men the Knowledge of God unto salvation had pre-eminent if not exclusive claims; while it is undeniably certain that they have generally and continually used methods in the treatment of Theology, which were arbitrary, capricious and inconsistent with each other. On the other hand, what I maintain is, that a science being given, a method responsive to the nature of that science, follows of necessity; that the science of the Knowledge of God unto salvation being a pure science of absolute truth both inductive and deductive—and the sources of it exhaustively demonstrated—an analogous method of developing and teaching that science is inevitable: that till the acknowledgment and suc-

cessful application of that method, the science to which it appertains cannot possibly reach its complete development and statement; and that even after the perfection of the science, it could not be adequately taught otherwise than by its own natural method. It seems to me that if all this were propounded merely as a speculation, instead of being almost self-evidently true as soon as it is clearly stated; the history of the progress of Theology through all ages, would beget the most violent presumption that the speculation was true.

Truth is capable of being considered systematically and absolutely, simply as truth reduced into a scientific form. Thus understood, but not otherwise, any system of truth is afterwards capable of being considered in all the possible effects and influences of that system of truth. Let it be remembered that no number of isolated truths, which have no known relations to each other, can ever be reduced into a scientific form, or ever produce any effects, or have any consequences, considered as a system. They cannot compose any system, nor be the subject of any knowledge beyond the mere knowledge of them as intractible particulars. If this be the character of Divine Revelation, it is idle to speak of systematic knowledge of it—absurd to talk about the plan of salvation. If there is any such thing as a system of divine truth capable of being known by man, then that system is necessarily subject to the distinction stated above; and considered in both the aspects stated, it is capable of being precisely distinguished from all serious error. It is in these three aspects that the Knowledge of God unto salvation must be considered, if it is to be completely understood—must be stated if it is to attain a complete scientific form. When so stated and so understood—allowance being made for human weakness—every pure science is placed in the only position in which its own perfect development is possible; and every separate truth which enters into that science, as it is demonstrated and located with precision, instead of weakening, confirms the science and adds to its efficacy, whether considered in an abstract, a practical, or a relative point of view. Every system of truth, and above all the system of divine truth, must be capable of maintaining itself under the test of this threefold and exhaustive aspect of all truth. In divine truth thus tested, even those sublime mysteries which men are pleased to call the contradictions of the Scriptures, disclose their real nature as great spiritual paradoxes inherent in the nature of the subject, necessarily liable to a double solution by us, and perceived to belong to a generalization higher than our faculties can reach in their present state.

Thus there is the clearest possible distinction between the exact statement of truth, and a disputation in support of that truth; a distinction, I insist, which cannot be overlooked in the elemental statement of any

science, without arresting its progress and weakening the impression of truth; and in the moral sciences above all, a distinction most needful to be strictly observed. Thus too, after the truth has been completely extricated, and clearly stated in its elemental forms, the further distinction becomes perfectly obvious, namely, that between truth, and the effects of truth; and the neglect of it is as fatal as the neglect of the preceding distinction. It took seven centuries for Theologians to settle, in scientific form, the great elements of their science—the doctrines of God—of the Godman, and of man—though during all these seven centuries, not a single child of God erred fatally touching either doctrine. It took the Theologians eight centuries more to obtain the grand position of the Reformers, namely, that the sum of the whole Knowledge of God attainable by man, of which the sacred Scriptures are the only infallible rule and guide, is that which is to be cast into a scientific form, as Christian Theology. I have pointed out both the failure, and the causes of it, of the scientific progress of the Reformed Theology beyond the position won for it in the sixteenth century. Distinctions inseparable from the complete conception of any system of truth whatever, cannot be overlooked with impunity; nor can the denial of the existence of such distinctions produce any effect so immediate, as the exclusion of the supposed truths to which those distinctions do not apply, from the pale of the sciences. In Theology, to neglect the former distinction is to deprive divine truth, as far as an evil method can, of whatever power it has by reason of its own inherent force and glorious light; and to neglect the latter distinction is to confound the efficacy, which the Holy Spirit gives to truth by his superadded work in man, with the truth itself after it has first had its self-evidencing light obscured.

On the other hand the clear recognition of the distinctions I have pointed out, unavoidably presents the Knowledge of God unto salvation, under three distinct aspects: one of them objective—the mere truth; one of them subjective—the effects of truth in us, and on us; one of them relative—truth and its effects confronted with untruth. Whether or not the Knowledge of God is a science of positive truth, does not depend on us, but on God. I maintain that it is, and that the just acquisition, statement, and teaching of it, require in us an adequate conception of it as such. Whether or not being such a science, it must be treated by a method responsive to its own nature, does not depend upon our caprice; but on the very nature of knowledge, and of our own mental and moral constitution. I maintain that the slow, irregular, and imperfect progress of scientific Theology in all ages, is to be attributed in a great degree, to the inadequate conception of the science itself, and to the vicious methods of treating it which necessarily resulted from that inadequate conception; and I have suggested and used what I conceive to be a

method naturally responsive to an adequate conception of the science itself; starting from the great elements settled in the seventh century, and the great position reached in the sixteenth—since which period, in my opinion, little true progress has been made in the systematic statement of divine truth considered as a great science. Whether or not a particular attempt to vindicate this science in its adequate conception, and by a true method responsive to its nature, restate it in its own simple, coherent, and august power, is worthy of the consideration of the people of God; depends essentially on the ability, the insight, the attainments, and the patient toil of him who makes the attempt. As to the value of my own attempt, they to whom I have dedicated this and the preceding Treatise, shall judge. If the penitent and believing followers of the Saviour of sinners—if they who fervently desire life after death—find light and consolation in what I have written—that which I have done will live. Otherwise no oblivion can await my labours, more remorseless than that which covers those of the bulk of my predecessors.

Concerning the present Treatise, I think I may say with confidence, that no one who will patiently consider it can misunderstand the general view it presents of the saving grace of God, or the general argument sustained throughout, concerning the whole method and effects of that Grace. I accept the Scriptures as the Word of God; I understand them to relate to the salvation of fallen men, to disclose the precise nature of that salvation, the exact manner in which it is achieved in man, and the whole effects and consequences, personal and general, present and eternal, which are wrought out in us, through the truth contained in them, by the Holy Ghost. What I attempt is to follow rigidly the course of the divine thought, to illustrate faithfully the progress of the divine work, and to demonstrate both throughout. Upon my conception of the subject, no other course is possible: upon the method responsive to that conception, this direct and concatenated treatment is unavoidable. It ought to follow, according to the measure of grace given to me, that herein is a compact and continuous exhibition of the life of God in the soul of man, responsive to the revealed way of life eternal; everything hetoregeneous being excluded, and everything admitted being a part of the uninterrupted demonstration. Besides this complete personal exhibition of salvation, the organization by God of his covenant people into a visible kingdom, gives to salvation an organic and social aspect, precisely commensurate with the relation of the Church of Christ to the work of divine grace in salvation. There ought, therefore, to be found herein, according as God has enabled me, a precise and complete demonstration and exposition of the Church of the living God, in its nature, and end—and very especially in its Gospel state. The Christian and the Church of God ought to be demonstrated on the divine word, in developing the Knowledge of God

Subjectively considered. This illustrates what I mean by teaching Theology, as distinguished from a compend of Theology. This is what my conception and method exact. In so far as I may have done anything approaching what I have just stated, it is through God's grace. My shortcomings are, I think, justly to be attributed, not to my conception of the subject, nor to my method of treating it, but to my personal incapacity to work out so great a result, in a fitting manner.

The order of the general demonstration may be made intelligible, by a brief statement. In the First Book, I attempt to trace and to prove the manner in which the Knowledge of God unto salvation passes over from being merely objective, and becomes subjective. In the Second Book, I endeavour to disclose and to demonstrate the whole work of God in man, unto his personal salvation. In the Third Book, the personal effects and results of this divine subjective work, are sought to be explicated. This seems to me to exhaust the subject, in its subjective personal aspect. But these individual Christians, by means of their union with Christ, and their consequent communion with each other, are organized by God into a visible Kingdom; which has a direct and precise relation to the subjective consideration of the Knowledge of God. From this point, therefore, the social and organic aspect of the subject arises; and the Fourth Book is occupied with what is designed to be a demonstration of the Church of the living God. But just as the work of grace in individual men, is necessarily followed by the Christian offices, and so the subject of the Third Book necessarily followed the subject of the Second: in like manner, the consideration of the gifts of God to his Church, and of all the effects of those gifts, follows the organization and progress of the visible Church in a peculiar manner. And thus the subject of the Fourth Book leads directly to the subject of the Fifth, in which the life, action and organism of the Church are discussed, with reference to the special gifts bestowed on it by God. And here the organic aspect of the Knowledge of God unto salvation, subjectively considered, seems to terminate. What remains is the General Conclusion of the whole subject, in a very brief attempt to estimate the progress and result of these divine realities, and to disclose the revealed consummation of God's Works of Creation, Providence and Grace.

A true Christian Theology ought to be just in its scientific conception, exact in its method of development, natural in the order of its topics, clear in its continual expositions, adequate in its great generalizations, carefully observant of the divine proportion of its parts, pervaded by the unity which belongs to a high and continuous demonstration, and guided by a spiritual insight and a sense of the presence of the living God in all and through all. For, after all, it is the Knowledge of God unto salvation which is the substance: Scientific Theology, at the best, is only the form

under which that divine substance is presented. Its glory and its triumph would be, to obtain, at length, that form which accords perfectly with that heavenly substance. Whoever will attempt to exhibit in a scientific manner, the chief parts of that Knowledge so far as he possesses it; will have occasion when his task is even worthily accomplished, to bewail the poverty of the exhibition he has made, compared—I need not say—with the grandeur of his theme, but even with his own conception of it.

In the *Preliminary Words* prefixed to the First Part of Theology, I made certain statements and explanations upon such topics as seemed to me to require it; some of which had more particular reference to that Treatise, and others more particular reference to the whole work, of which that was the first of three parts. Without repeating here any of those statements,—I refer to them and adopt them all, as applicable with the same emphasis, and in the same sense, to this Treatise as to that. They were never capable of being misunderstood; unless, perhaps, to authorize the supposition that my use of the labours of others, both in that Treatise and in this, was far more extensive than in fact it was; and that my contributions to the true progress of Christian Theology were less distinct, than they might turn out to be. Claiming nothing, except a patient consideration by the people of God, of a sincere endeavour to restate with perfect simplicity, and according to its own sublime nature, and in its own glorious proportion, the Knowledge of God unto salvation; I confidently ask, who are they amongst the living,—how many are there amongst the dead,—on whose behalf it can be truly asserted, that such a claim is unjust to them, or unbecoming in me?

The preceding volume was a complete Treatise; the present volume is also a complete Treatise: the two united contain all I propose to advance on what is sometimes called Systematic Theology, sometimes Dogmatic Theology, sometimes merely Theology. The former volume contains the objective, the present one the subjective consideration of saving truth: saving truth in itself—saving truth in its working. It will complete my original design, if the Lord spares me and enables me to compose and publish one more volume, devoted to what is commonly called Polemic or controversial Theology, embracing Apologetics; that is, to what I contemplate as the Knowledge of God considered relatively to all untruth incompatible with salvation.

BRÆDALBANE, near Lexington, Ky., *April*, 1859.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD,

SUBJECTIVELY CONSIDERED.

ARGUMENT OF THE FIRST BOOK.

I HAVE attempted in a former Treatise, to demonstrate and to classify the whole knowledge of God attainable by man unto salvation, considered as mere Knowledge; and thus to exhibit Theology in the purely objective—as in every other aspect of it, as a science of Positive Truth, both inductive and deductive. This volume, devoted to the thorough treatment of the knowledge of God subjectively considered in the actual salvation of fallen men, occupies this First Book of it in pointing out the whole aspect and method, both universal and particular, of the transition of that knowledge from the Objective into the Subjective. It concerns itself in explicating the divine Plan, Economy, and Method, whereby, what has been hitherto treated as mere knowledge, attainable by man, passes over and becomes an infinite force upon man and in man; and in demonstrating the certainty of salvation in this way, and its utter impossibility in any other. The First Chapter, therefore, of this First Book, discusses the condition in which the created universe was placed by the Sentence of God and his Promise of a Saviour, upon the Fall of Man; and, in particular, it attempts to settle the actual condition of the human race as determined by the creation, the trial, the fall, the sentence, and the promise; and to solve all the great problems involved in that attempt. The Second Chapter is devoted to a discussion of the Covenant of Redemption, of whose existence the promise of the Seed of the woman, so decisive upon the fate of the universe and especially of man, was the first intimation; wherein the nature and reality of that Covenant, together with its relation to the nature and grace of God, and to the Persons of the Godhead, and to the salvation of man, are exhibited; and the chief principles and truths on which it rests, with the chief cavils against it, and the method and efficacy of its operation, are considered. The Third Chapter discloses in a special manner the relation of this Eternal Covenant to the intimate nature, inner life, and fundamental convictions of man; the nature and rule of Duty,—the sovereignty of God and the dependence of man, the relation of divine Grace to such conditions, and the efficacy of personal redemption—are discussed; and the whole question of personal salvation and the failure of it, is traced to its ultimate ground, and the true nature of Redeeming Love is exhibited in its method and in its results. The Fourth Chapter is occupied with an exposition of the special obligations laid on man, as the special conditions of his participation in the benefits of the Covenant of Redemption; wherein the ultimate truths concerning human nature are examined, with reference to the divine means of human restoration, and as the result it is shown that Repentance towards God, and Faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ, both of which are summarily explained, are the unavoidable and the universal, as they are the revealed and effectual conditions

of salvation for fallen men; and the nature of the impotenee produced by sin—the universal need of divine aid by every created being—the glory of divine Graee, and the eertainty of perdition without it, are set forth. The Fifth Chapter, which is also the last one of this First Book, is an attempt to diselose the whole Economy of the Covenant of Redemption, under all its administrations—with the special design of determining with precision our own aetual position with reference thereto; wherein the Covenants of Works and Redemption are compared, and their agreement and difference pointed out; the suecessive dispensations of the latter Covenant, from Adam to the consummation of all things, are briefly exhibited—together with the condition of the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world at each great epoch relatively to each other; and the absolute unity of the essence of the Covenant of Redemption under all Dispensations is demonstrated—together with the nature and power of the knowledge, and the eertainty of the salvation, thus attainable. As the result of this course of enquiry and demonstration, we are brought immediately to the direct applieation of divine knowledge, with divine power, through divine Grace, to our own hearts as individual sinners; which great work is developed in the Seeond Book. In this Book—if a selection can be made of a small number of fundamental truths covering in a general but decisive way, the immense field explored in it—the following statements may be considered as condensing the whole, namely,—That as the result of the Fall of Man, of the interloeutory Sentence then pronounced by God, and of the Promise of a Saviour then made by Him, the human raee lies in a condition of sin and misery under the penalty of the broken Covenant of Works, and under the curse of God's violated law, but with God's promise of deliverance through the Saviour to all the followers of Christ,—and awaiting the final sentence of eternal life or eternal death at the judgment of the great day:—That the sole foundation of the sinner's hope lies in the sovereign Grace of God, of which grace the Word of God is a divine Revelation, and the manner of whieh grace in its fundamental statement is, the Covenant from Eternity between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to save by the work of each with the concurrence of all, the Elect of God whom the Son represented as their Federal head in that Covenant, with eaeh of whom it beeomes a personal covenant of life on his union with Christ, by the renewing of the Holy Ghost:—That the fundamental prineiples and truths involved in the Covenant of Redemption, have a relevaney most intimate and most efficacious, to the spiritual nature, inner life, and religious convictions of fallen men, they being and they alone being, that Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation:—That Repentance toward God and Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, are the universal and unalterable obligations and eonditions of the Covenant of Redemption,—obligations binding upon every sinner,—conditions irrespeetive of which none ean be saved:—That the Administration of the Covenant of Redemption embraces all that God has ever done or will do for men considered as sinners,—throughout every Dispensation of which the same grace reigns, the same salvation is propounded, the same Saviour is held forth, the same union with him through the renewing of the Holy Ghost is exhibited, and the same eternal life is made the inheritanee of God's Elect, through God's love.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONDITION OF THE UNIVERSE: AS IT LAY UNDER THE SENTENCE OF GOD, BUT WITH THE PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE.

I. 1. The Law of Nature.—2. Revealed Will of God anterior to the Covenant of Works.—3. The Covenant of Works: Penalty, General and Special.—4. Perfect Solution of the Origin, Career, Position, and Destiny of Man.—5. Explication of the Theoretical by the Actual. II. 1. Moral Constitution of Man.—2. It involves the Existence of an Infinite Ruler.—3. The Nature of His boundless Dominion.—4. Its Infinite Certainty, Rectitude, and Completeness.—5. The State of the Fallen Universe under that Dominion, and Modification of that State by the Covenant of Grace. III. 1. The Problems to be solved after the Fall, and the Parties thereto.—2. Statement of the Case.—3. God's Irreversible Sentence on Satan: Its Nature and Effects.—4. Sentence upon the Woman and the Man: General Statement.—5. Detailed Explanation of those Sentences, in their Nature and Effects: Mixed Condition of Things.—6. God's Sentence upon the Earth: And the Earth's promised Deliverance. IV. 1. The Posture of the Universe, as explained with, and without, the Word of God.—2. The Posture of the Universe, as explained with, and without, the Idea of Divine Grace.—3. What God actually did after the Fall of Man: And the Effects thereof.—4. Combined Result of the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace, upon the Condition of Man.—5. Difference between God's Conduct towards Satan and his Seed, and towards the Followers of the promised Seed of the Woman.—6. Every Thing depends on the Grace of God, and the Willingness and Sufficiency of Jesus Christ.

I.—1. If we reject the divine revelation which is recorded in the Sacred Scriptures, we are left wholly without knowledge of the primeval state of man ; and are unable to penetrate the final destiny of our race, or any individual of it. That revelation explains in the most precise manner, the original creation of man, the position he occupied, at first, with respect to God and to the universe, and the intimate nature of his own being, his endowments and his duty, his peril and his reward. Out of the state of the case thus exhibited to us by God, there necessarily arose obligations founded in the very truths, great as they were, upon which the case proceeded ; principles inherent in the very nature of the case ; necessities of every sort which must control mankind, considered in their relations to each other, to the universe,

and to God; laws in their very highest sense, and whether they were uttered in words or not, which are the necessary middle term between the idea of a creator and the idea of a creature. Here is the Law of Nature. And whatever nature herself may be, than which hardly anything is more difficult to conceive or define precisely, that code to which we justly give her name and which her Creator and ours stamped upon her in her first purity, must not only abide while she endures, but has received the sublime confirmation of being fully recognized and largely restated in the inspired Word of God.

2. In addition to this fundamental law of our very being, incorporated by our Creator in our very nature, still dimly felt notwithstanding our fall, and explicitly restated in the sacred Scriptures; God added other laws, having special relation to man, which were clearly stated to him at his creation, and which were recorded twenty-five centuries afterwards on the earliest pages of the Scriptures. Thus God consecrated man whom he had created in his own image, to his endless service and enjoyment; thus God consecrated the Sabbath day, the type and commemoration of this ineffable repose when this work of creation was done; thus God gave to man an unlimited dominion over the earth and over every creature inferior to himself, and bade him increase and multiply, possess the earth, subdue it, and enjoy it. And these laws of the primeval state of man, following immediately after the Law of Nature, and preceding immediately the Covenant of Works, however they, like all else, may have been defaced and impaired by the Fall of Man, are indestructibly united with the mortal existence of the human race, and enter decisively into the eternal results of that existence.

3. Thus created by God, thus additionally bound to God, man in his primeval estate became the object of a still further proof of the care and love of his Creator. God made with him a Covenant of Life, upon the single condition of perfect obedience to a single precept and a single prohibition. A Covenant, that is, whereby the probation incident to a perfect but fallible being, was made precise, temporary, and slight; whereby the probation of a whole race was concentrated on the probation of the natural progenitor and federal head of that race; whereby the high estate already possessed might not only be delivered from all risk and confirmed forever, but might be gloriously and eternally ad-

vanced ; whereby even if he fell, certain advantages would remain to his race, beyond what were possible after a fall, in other manner. This is the Covenant of Works. It found man in a condition of great glory and blessedness, and it proposed to secure to his whole race forever, the possession and increase of both. In this respect it failed. The same transgression which defeated it as a Covenant of Life, and brought upon the sinner its just penalty, was at the same time a violation of the fundamental Law of Nature, and of the fundamental consecration of man to the service and enjoyment of God superadded to the Law of Nature, and subjected him to the just penalty of both. What was the penalty to the Covenant of Works, was stated in the Covenant itself. What was the penalty of the violation of the first and highest Law of Nature, and what was that annexed to those additions to it which preceded the Covenant, were not declared beforehand : they remained to be disclosed by God, when and how he pleased. All might be presumed to be concentrated in the fearful penalty annexed to the Covenant ; the more readily, as it was a Covenant, not of vengeance but of Life, and as its penalty was the highest ever inflicted by Jehovah. At any rate, the Covenant of Works, like both systems of Law which preceded it, abode as an elemental and indestructible part of the spiritual system of the universe to which man appertained ; and it, like them, will endure, in its place and to its ends, until the final catastrophe of nature, and man, and sin.

4. It is to the breach of the Covenant of Works—the Fall of Man—that the word of God constantly attributes the present condition of the human race, a condition which it everywhere describes as one of sin and misery. Nor can it be denied that in the facts stated in the Scriptures, concerning the creation, original state, trial, and fall of man, a perfect explanation is furnished of the whole career and present condition of the human race. Theoretically, at least, the grandest problems of humanity are solved ; and it behooves the caviller to cast some doubt over the facts themselves, or to accept the perfect solution they afford ; and all the more urgently, since besides these facts asserted by God and transmitted through all generations, the whole human race has been unable to suggest even a conjecture, upon which its own actual condition could be adequately explained. The original perfection, and at the same time the fallibility of human

nature, are the fundamental data of the Covenant of Works; precisely as the pollution, and at the same time the susceptibility of restoration, in fallen human nature, are the fundamental data of the Covenant of Grace; data infinitely remarkable and fruitful, not one of which any human intellect had ever of itself perceived to be an element in the solution of the great problems of humanity, at which the human intellect has never ceased to labor. No less remarkable—nor less fruitful—was that other basis of the Covenant of Works, namely, that moral evil, and by means of it physical evil also, might find entrance into a perfect universe through the act of a perfect but fallible creature; just as it is a basis of the Covenant of Grace, that these evils can be repaired through the incarnation of the Godhead in the very nature which fell, and in no other way; sublime realities, before which the mysteries of our condition vanish. No less remarkable again—nor yet less fruitful—is that other basis of the Covenant of Works, that while God deals with every human being individually and directly, yet besides this and beneath this, there is a wider and deeper mode of God's dealing with the common head and root of all—for the whole race; both of which truths apply with perfect force under the Covenant of Grace; immeasurable truths, in the absence of which our condition and God's dealings with us are alike inexplicable, but in the combined light of which both Covenants and the effects of both of them upon us are perfectly comprehensible.

5. That perfect but fallible head and progenitor of our race was tried—and fell. That possibility of the entrance of evil into a perfect universe, actually occurred. That principle of covenanted dealing by God with man, through which life and immortality are now brought to light through Jesus Christ, when first applied produced through Adam the ruin of our race. The favour and the image of God are lost; the race is no longer perfect, but is fallen and depraved; it lies under the curse of God's violated law, the penalty of his broken covenant. And in this condition the personal dealings of God with each individual sinner, must necessarily have regard to all those transgressions, which besides their original source in the primeval fallibility of man, have a new and more virulent source in the polluted nature inherited since the fall. Nor are the results of these transactions either doubtful, accidental, or capable of remedy by us. Man

has broken covenant with God, and rendered himself alike unworthy and incapable of life by means of that defaced covenant; and God has judicially annulled it as a covenant of life, has passed an interlocutory sentence upon all who were implicated in its breach or involved in its penalty, has been executing that sentence since the hour in which he uttered it, and only awaits the judgment of the great day to make it final and complete. The actual condition of the universe, and more especially that of the human race, is exact and determinate—ascertained and declared by God himself—the inevitable result of what had gone before—and wholly irremediable except through the sovereign grace of God, and the incarnation and sacrifice of his only begotten Son. These sublime principles and truths find their explanation and defence throughout the sacred Scriptures ; the whole providence of God affords a perpetual illustration of them ; and every human heart, and every human life displays the constancy and the power with which they separately or unitedly control the condition and destiny of man.

II.—1. It is impossible for us to separate the inward sense of duty from the outward ideas of obligation and responsibility; or from the inward sense of blameworthiness if that sense of duty is violated, and of satisfaction if it is obeyed. But this sense of blameworthiness is no less than the testimony of nature to our righteous liability to punishment for transgression ; and this sense of inward satisfaction is no less than a corresponding testimony of nature to the reality of virtue, which considered merely of the soul may well be called the realization of the health and beauty and good habit thereof. So that in the very constitution of our nature as it now exists, there is the clearest proof that there are such things as right and wrong—that the difference between them is ineffaceable—that wrong doing is not only the proper ground of punishment, but directly productive of misery—and that right doing is not only the proper ground of approbation, but directly productive of happiness.

2. The direct punishment of wrong doing is to be distinguished from the incidental consequences of that wrong doing, in the way of incurring or even of enduring the punishment. Those incidental consequences may be, even under a perfect administration, a very sore aggravation of the punishment itself ; and in all imperfect administrations may become more terrible than the proper

penalty of transgression. On the other hand, they may become not only great alleviations of punishment, but the means of great and lasting benefit to the transgressor. Wherefore to call them punishment in the proper sense, would be to say that even under a perfect administration the violation of duty stands an equal chance of being advantageous ; and that under an imperfect administration fitness to be punished is not a proper ground upon which justice can proceed, either with safety or certainty : results which subvert all moral distinctions. It will be observed that the very terms I have used, and every idea they all suggest, necessarily involve a lawgiver, a law, and a subject of it—three terms which absolutely stand or fall together. So that the existence of an infinite Ruler of the Universe, the approver of right doing and the punisher of wrong doing—the administrator also of the boundless complexities incidental to both actions, is involved in the very nature of our own moral constitution.

3. What has been said in the preceding paragraph embraces the whole distinction between punishment properly considered, and whatever is merely incidental thereto—whether these incidents appertain to the actual infliction of the punishment, or whether they appertain immediately to the trangression itself, or whether they appertain to the method of dealing with the culprit between the perpetration of the offence and the infliction of the penalty. To suppose that all these incidents are merely proofs of an imperfect administration, would not alter the case at all, or affect the moral principles involved in it, even if the supposition were true. To suppose, with regard to the infinite administration of God, that all these incidents must have been foreseen by him, and all been allowed for in giving us such a nature as he has, and such a moral code to the universe as is answerable to that nature—is but stating the condition under which the principles themselves operate, under which the incidents themselves occur. The infinite complications of the universe, and the infinite wisdom, power, justice, and goodness of God in directing them all by his adorable providence, are subjects of the most transcendent interest : but the very thing we need is the means of piercing those endless complications which surround us on all sides, the fundamental truths upon which that boundless and irresistible providence may be at once understood and vindicated. If we will deal justly with ourselves, as the beginning of that

perpetual right doing which God approves, and which diffuses satisfaction through our own souls, we shall find that God has laid in the very nature we possess those precise elements, and has explicated throughout his most blessed word those great and satisfying truths, whereby the conscience and reason he has given us are competent to justify his ways, and to know, not only that he is, but that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

4. How God could permit transgression to go unpunished, is wholly inconceivable. The highest manifestation which has ever occurred of his infinite grace to sinners and his infinite compassion for the miserable—the cross, namely, on which his only begotten Son offered himself a sacrifice—is the very highest proof of which we can conceive, that every transgression and disobedience must receive a just recompense of reward. And so the Scriptures perpetually assert. That which our own hearts teach us we deserve—punishment for transgression; that which our reason can discover no possibility of avoiding, when contemplated merely on the human side of the case; becomes an irresistible necessity as soon as we allow ourselves to contemplate the divine side of it. There is no more possibility that God should allow sin to go unpunished, than that he should allow innocence to be condemned. And in nothing is he more careful to inform us, than that the apparent departures from these eternal necessities which we observe in human affairs, are but temporary and anomalous; and that the stupendous departure from them in the work of redemption through the divine Saviour of sinners, is the very highest manifestation of the principles themselves, wrought out through the infinite goodness of God, to the infinite glory of God, and springing from a transcendent generalization of all the perfections of God.

5. Satan, and man, and the brute creation, and the earth itself—our universe; all, lying under the curse of God, lie under the force of all the truths I have stated, all the principles I have distinguished. Every thing is polluted by sin; every thing lies under the penalty of transgression; every thing has actually received sentence, and awaits a farther sentence at the great day; every thing must endure, in some form or other, its due recompense. Besides this, whatever things are incidental to transgression, let them be what they may; and whatever are incidental

to punishment; and whatever are incidental to process in its widest sense, if I may so speak; all—all must be encountered. And the infinite complications of the universe, and the infinite dominion of God, are—as to the former but elements, and as to the latter but the means, whereby, and wherein, infinite wisdom, and justice, and grace continually expatiate in accomplishing the eternal purpose of God's infinite will, to his own boundless glory. The entrance of the Covenant of Grace modified everything. The primeval promise of a Saviour, uttered by God as a part of the sentence he pronounced on Satan, changed the condition of the universe. God revealed therein the principles on which he would act towards a universe lying under his curse: on the one hand, inextinguishable wrath against Satan and his seed; on the other hand infinite grace towards fallen man; gloriously developed throughout the word of God, and efficacious to eternity. But still the curse remained, and the universe lay under it; and it lies under it still. A universe under God's curse—but with the promise of an infinite deliverance, limited only in that Satan and his seed have no part in it; a universe before our eyes, after so many weary ages, still struggling under that curse towards that deliverance; groaning and travailing in pain under the bondage of corruption, but still cherishing the hope in which it was subjected of attaining to the glorious liberty of the children of God.

III. 1. Let us attempt to estimate in a more detailed manner this mixed condition of the universe, as the elements thereof are delivered to us in the account of them inspired by God himself. Nothing more remarkable ever occurred on earth. It is God the Creator and Ruler of the universe, Satan the head of the fallen angels and the destroyer of the human race, and the first parents of that race, who are the parties to transactions so wonderful. And the questions adjudged are vast beyond the conception of any but God himself; the fate of the universe he had created, the destiny of the human race created in his own image and now fallen from it—the overthrow of his first covenant as a Covenant of Life—the first discovery of his new and better covenant—the question of his own eternal glory, of vengeance on the Devil and his seed, of grace and salvation for his own elect! How can the grandeur of such topics, and the utter insufficiency of human reason for their solution, be more clearly displayed, than by the fact that their solution resulted, as I have before ventured to ex-

press it, through a transcendent generalization of all the perfections of God, and that the method of that salvation lay in the incarnation and sacrifice of the Son of God !

2. The first three chapters of the Book of Genesis, with which the inspired volume opens, contain a detailed though wonderfully compact statement of the creation of the heavens and the earth and all that in them is ; very especially of the creation and original nature and primeval estate of man ; of the giving to him by God of the Covenant of Works, his trial under it, his breach of it, and the consequent fall of the sentence of God upon all the parties implicated in this transaction, and upon the universe which was involved with them ; and of the first intimation by God, that the great deliverer should come, and that all things should be restituted and recapitulated in him. It is the closing portion of these transcendent acts, with which, at this moment, we are specially concerned in the present attempt to appreciate the condition in which the universe was left, when they were all finished, and our first parents were driven from the Garden of Eden ; the sentence of God, namely, and the promise of the Seed of the woman, and the threat of the destruction of Satan. The whole of these vast subjects have been carefully analysed and expounded, as the sources of complete and universal knowledge to us, touching the matters to which they relate—in a former Treatise ; and having occasion now to examine a portion of them for the special purpose immediately before us, I content myself, as to what does not fall necessarily into the present use, with this general reference to that Treatise.

3. The Scriptures abundantly testify that Satan, under the form of the serpent, was the real tempter of our first parents.[1] His sentence, therefore, has this twofold aspect of the bestial and the diabolical nature of the agency which produced the fall of man ; and as God has put these aspects together, we need not be careful to separate them. The penalty denounced on him, was for his agency in the fall of man. Whatever punishment he may deserve, or receive for other sins, it is for his part in the ruin of man that he is sentenced and punished, in connection with the dispensation of God towards man. Because thou hast done this, is the formula used by God ; the very same used in sentencing Adam ; the fault first, and then the punishment. Not

[1] Rev., xii. 9; xxii. 1–3.

only does the curse of God and all that is involved therein rest on Satan, but it does so in a manner the highest and deepest of all; cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field; of which a flagrant—as well as a symbolical exhibition should be made to the universe, in the prostrate condition of the serpent, and in the vileness of his common sustenance. But the main part and proof of the penalty and curse on Satan, lies in the enmity denounced by God between the Devil and his seed on the one side, and the woman and her Seed on the other side.[1] We have herein a very extraordinary intimation of the preternatural generation of Christ, and of all that is involved therein; and the enmity between the seed of Satan and the Seed of the woman is as clearly denounced as the enmity between Satan and the woman. But beyond all doubt, Christ is that Seed of the woman intended, and his people in him as their head.[2] And again, beyond all doubt, the obstinately impenitent are embraced among the seed of Satan, and are expressly and repeatedly called the children of the Devil, a generation of vipers and the like.[3] The obstinately and finally impenitent are, therefore, no more embraced in any provision of the Covenant of Grace, terminating in salvation, than the Devil himself is. This quenchless and eternal enmity of Satan and his seed to the woman and her Seed, is a large part of their interlocutory sentence, and of so much of the penalty of transgression as is executed upon them before their final sentence and second death. Pitiless hate, and malice, and every evil passion consuming them; aggravated beyond conception by the object of their enmity being worthy of their boundless love, and beyond the reach of their inextinguishable hate; a state of case applying in its degree, to their enmity towards every child of God. At the same time the enmity of the Seed of the woman to Satan and his seed, begets in these enemies of God, endless disquiet, dread, and terror, and ends in their total overthrow, ruin, and perdition. Even their partial success in bruising his heel, being utterly malicious and diabolical, can add nothing but misery and pollution to them, and can effectually promote only their own punishment and woe. It can never be more than a partial success, bruising the heel only;

[1] Gen., iii. 14, 15.

[2] Ps., cxxxii. 11; Isa., vii. 14; viii. 8; Matt., i. 23–25; Luke, i. 31–35; Gal., iv. 4.

[3] Matt., iii. 7; xiii. 38; xxiii. 33; John, viii. 44; Acts, xiii. 10; 1 John, iii. 8.

it can never fail to be in the end a source of rage and disappointment—even in its progress attended with tormenting uncertainty, disquietude, and alarm. Even when the crucifixion of the promised Seed had been achieved, the effect was the overthrow of the kingdom of darkness ; a result whose possibility Satan himself seems to have had some fearful suspicion might be impending in some way he did not comprehend ; as appears to be intimated in that remarkable attempt of the wife of Pilate to arrest the execution of Jesus.[1] In all the Scriptures scarcely anything is more distinctly set before us, than the great outline of the character and career of Satan. His original state as a pure and exalted spirit ; his revolt in heaven and his being cast into hell ; his ruin of our first parents ; his hatred and malice against the Christ of God and all his followers ; his ceaseless temptations, accusations, and persecutions ; his boundless cruelties, his endless seductions, his shameless lies, even to the denial of his own existence, his employment of civil butchers, his inciting religious seducers, his uniting both in one in the long lines of Heathen, and Papal, and Mohammedan oppressors of the children of God ; a liar and a murderer from the beginning—a liar and murderer to the end ! Blessed be God for the hope that we are approaching the period, when God's angel will lay hold on the Dragon, that old serpent which is the Devil and Satan, and bind him for a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him.[2] Blessed be God for the assurance, made ours through the blood of Christ, that after those thousand years are out, and after Satan shall have been loosed out of his prison to deceive the nations ; our eyes shall at last behold death and hell and Satan cast into the lake of torment, even the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the fallen prophet are, and where they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.[3] Analogous to the character, the career, and the destiny of Satan, is that of those whom the Scriptures in view of their original ruin through him, their bond service of him through their mortal existence, and their final perdition with him—call his seed. However fearful it may be to contemplate any portion of the human race under an aspect so terrible, it is impossible for us to escape the meaning of God in the sentence we have been considering, or to avoid the confirmation thereof in

[1] Matt., xxvii. 19. [2] Rev., xx. 1–3. [3] Rev., xx. 7–15.

every statement of the divine word relating to the finally impenitent, or to shun the overwhelming proof of the guilt, pollution, misery, and ruin of the ungodly, which is the most conspicuous part of the sum of all human knowledge concerning the human race. Nay, the more we know of God and his word, of Satan, of the human race and of ourselves, the more are we ready to magnify the riches of that divine Grace whereby sinners are saved, and to confess that it is because they are unsearchable riches, that any sinner at all is saved. It is in vain that we would shut our eyes to the fact that it is not only a part of our vocation, but a part of the very blessedness thereof, that we must suffer with Christ.[1] It is worse than in vain, it is an abnegation of the very nature of redemption, and the very nature of the universe in which redemption is manifested, to suppose that Christ Jesus, contrary to his own express teachings, did not come into the world to send a sword, but only peace on earth.[2]

4. Following the sentence of the serpent, the sentence of the woman, and then the sentence of Adam is recorded by Moses.[3] Referring to the former Treatise, in which the whole subject has been carefully examined, it belongs to the present necessity to treat it only in a special aspect. It is to be carefully observed that these sentences are pronounced by God after the sentence upon Satan had been pronounced, and after the promise of the Seed of the woman, which was a portion of that sentence. They are, therefore, sentences of God upon the human race considered really as fallen and guilty, but with the further and transcendent facts, that God had already promulged his purpose to destroy their destroyer, and to do this through their own nature manifested in the promised Seed of the woman; and in these elements combined lie the elements of the whole issues of human existence, and of the complete explanation of them all. The facts themselves, few as they are, and the order of their occurrence, precise as it is, all divinely made known to us, and all entering fundamentally into every subsequent portion of the word of God, are perfectly adequate to the explanation of every problem in the destiny of our race, and among the rest that great problem immediately before us, of a race lying under the sentence of God, but with God's promise of deliverance through a Saviour. For example, the fall preceded the promise of the Saviour; the

[1] Rom., viii. 17; Phil., i. 29. [2] Matt., x. *passim*. [3] Gen., iii. 16–19.

promise of the Saviour preceded the sentence of the woman and of Adam ; how wonderfully distinct it is, therefore, that the promised Seed of the woman had nothing to do with the Covenant of Works, either in its binding obligation, its breach, or the pollution and sentence which followed ; and how clear is the light thus thrown on the person and work of Messiah, and reflected back upon the condition of man ! It is also to be carefully observed, that these sentences of Eve and of Adam, and of their race in them, so far from being final, are in a manner obviously limited and interlocutory, tending to and distinctly awaiting the absolute sentence after we shall have returned to the dust as we were. And so far are they from being complete, in the immediate and full execution of the penalty of the Covenant of Works, that they do not even recite that penalty in its fulness : and they say nothing of our enormous guiltiness as under the Law of Nature, the Moral Law, and the Law of those primeval Institutes of God which lay between the creation and the covenant ; of all which I have treated specially in another place. As in the case of Satan, so in the case of these sentences upon the woman and the man, they are specific sentences under the Covenant of Works—omitting all allusion to other guiltiness ; and these especial sentences tempered with the remarkable omission of any distinct curse upon the human race, while that curse forms a most conspicuous part both of the sentence of Satan, and of the sentence of the earth. They are sentences, which on their very face show, that terrible as they were, they were compatible with the promised deliverance, and that they were pronounced against a race whose condition taken as a whole, was one of trial under a new form, and not of final condemnation. A peculiar sense is therefore to be given to all our statements of the curse of God upon our race, and of a divine deliverance for the race—which though they be true as general statements, are not true universally and strictly of all individuals. It is strictly and universally true that every human being underlies the penalty of every system of divine laws, for in one sense or other we have all violated them all ; and it is strictly true that every transgressor lies under the curse of every law he has violated ; and it is strictly true that Jesus Christ our Lord is able to save and is willing to save, and will save to the uttermost all who come to God by him. But it is not true that God has

ever by a formal sentence promulged his curse against his redeemed, who are the objects of that eternal love and that irreversible decree, of which the Covenant of Grace is, in thought, an outbirth. Nor is it true that God ever promulged a promise of deliverance to our fallen race, which can be tortured into an intimation that he would ever save from endless perdition, even so much as one single obstinately impenitent and unbelieving sinner. Under the sentence of God, and under the curse of God's law, and under the promise of divine deliverance, we struggle together on this side of the Jordan of death ; on the other side, it is all glory, or all perdition.

5. The mother of mankind incurred a double liability ; first—as she was first in the temptation and a direct agent in Adam's fall ; and secondly, as she was our common progenitrix, and in him also as formed out of his rib, one of his race. She is, therefore, first sentenced separately, and then is embraced with us all in the sentence pronounced on Adam. Her separate sentence involved in a special manner all her sex, considered in the particular relations occupied by her—every wife and every mother in the race.[1] As a wife—subjection ; as a mother, sorrow in conception, and sorrow in bringing forth children ; the fundamental conception which under our estate of sin and misery answers to mother is anguish, and to wife is servitude. It is the sentence of God ; and while sin pollutes man, every wife and every mother underlies it, as a perpetual proof of the overwhelming calamities which the first wife and mother brought upon all her posterity ; calamities which these most sacred relations may indeed assuage, but may also fearfully aggravate. It is thus that every decisive fact which the Scriptures connect with the Fall of Man lives and has its import made manifest through all generations. The sentence of God upon Adam immediately followed the sentence upon Eve ; it is, as I have largely explained in the former Treatise, a sentence upon the race of which he was at once the natural progenitor and the federal head—in one word the *root*. This sentence contains two parts, of which the first relates to the mortal existence of the race, and the second to the death which swallows it up ; embracing under both, the moral aspects which are the chief aspects of the whole case.[2] A life of trouble, and a life of toil, is the essence of the first part of this brief and awful

[1] Gen., iii. 16.

[2] Gen., iii. 17–19.

sentence. Trouble of every sort and from every source; toil, ceaseless toil, the livelong day of the world's life. If our lives were lives of innocence and virtue, if the sentence of God had only touched our physical and mental condition, how terrible is the catastrophe which has thus reduced us, the condition which this sentence contemplates and in which we behold ourselves this day, compared with our estate before the fall! Being thus reduced by transgression, and being therefore depraved, how great is the goodness of God that both trouble and toil are means—perhaps chief means of moral good to us! For toil is the parent of innumerable virtues, as well as of all true success, advancement, usefulness, and greatness; and trouble and sorrow are common and chief occasions of the richest blessings of God, and of the purest and highest manifestations of virtue. And thus on both sides, in the whole progress of our existence, the mixed condition of our present estate, is manifested to us; our fall and our sentence on one side—the divine promise and our hope of deliverance on the other. But the second part of this sentence is still more terrible: Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.[1] That temporal death was an express part of the penal sanction of the Covenant of Works, that it is expressly denounced as such in God's sentence upon Adam, and that in this way and in no other it found access to man and passed upon all men; cannot be denied without subverting every claim of the Scriptures to be a divine revelation.[2] It is a denial, moreover, as absurd as it is impious; for death as the result of life, is one of those inscrutable phenomena, the denial of which is impossible, the occurrence of which is shocking to human reason, the infidel explanations of which are ridiculous, and the divine solution of which is perfectly simple and complete. I do not know that Christianity has any interest in the question, nor that the Scriptures decisively settle it, how far the decay and death of the inferior creatures, are to be considered as the results of the fall of man. As none of those creatures are either spiritual or immortal, it is certain they do not incur either spiritual or eternal death, as the result of Adam's fall; and therefore escaping the two greater portions of the penalty, it seems to me a very minute question, and unworthy of discussion here, what may be the relations of dumb beasts to the third and low-

[1] Gen., iii. 19.

[2] Rom., v. *passim.*

est portion of it. As to man, the Scriptures teach us plainly not only that his mortal existence is forfeited by the fall, but that the portion of it allowed to him, has been from time to time greatly shortened and weakened, and thereby many other temporal evils of the fall aggravated upon the race. But even here there is proof of the mixed condition we are contemplating. For as the life of man is depraved, it is good that it should be short; as in that way it can the less establish on earth the means and instruments of sin and misery. And besides, everything which can keep us alive to the connection of sin with death, and to that of virtue with life, is at once a testimony to our actual condition and the manner in which we fell into it, and an incentive to shun evil and to pursue good. It is, however, the body only of man which is of the dust; his living soul is of the breath of God.[1] Separated at death, to be reunited in the resurrection, the body returns to the dust as it was—the spirit to God who gave it.[2] And then when the final judgment is passed upon the united soul and body, the sentence will be, *Come ye blessed*, or *Depart ye cursed*, as their works shall be, when the books are opened.[3] Eternal death, therefore, was as directly involved in the penalty of the Covenant of Works, as temporal death was; and nothing but the intervening promise of a Saviour, prevented it from being the very form of the divine sentence. After that promise, its indiscriminate pronunciation upon the whole race, was no longer possible; the final separation and sentence of the blessed and cursed being laid over to the great day; and the seed of Satan and the redeemed of God being permitted, under this long respite of judgment and execution, to walk together through all ages of trial with the curse and the promise perpetually manifested. Let us note, however, that it is only final sentence and complete execution that is thus respited to either party, till the day of judgment; the penalty of the broken covenant, and the promise of deliverance which latter has already been so gloriously fulfilled, both abiding in their unalterable force; and the final issue of the mixed condition of things being as distinct to God as it can be when it is reached. But there is still a third aspect of this penalty of death annexed to the Covenant of Works which is indeed the fundamental aspect, and which is made the explicit ground of the sentence we are immediately considering,

[1] Gen., ii. 7. [2] Eccl., xii. 7. [3] Matt., xxv. 31–46.

as it will be also of the eternal sentence, according to the perpetual statements of the word of God. Because thou hast done this, are the words with which God prefaced the sentence upon the serpent ;[1] and in like manner he said to Adam, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it.[2] The whole trial and sentence imply, are based upon, and conclude to trangression. It is because there was sin, that there was any punishment. Without it, there could be no condemnatory sentence by God. But there could be no sin on the part of a perfect but fallible being sentenced as Adam was, which did not involve the violation of his own nature, and that of every relation in which he stood to God. We may indeed cavil about the terms in which we will express our idea of the spiritual condition of Adam after this transgression ; those in which God has chosen to express it, and which his people in all ages have adopted, are that it was a condition of spiritual death, and that the act whereby it occurred, was the Fall of Man. It is this, the whole of which I have carefully expounded in another place, out of which both the temporal death and the eternal death of man come. Here lies the chief part of that ruin, and the source of all the rest—which nothing but the blood of the Son of God could heal ; the fountain of all the sin which pollutes our race, and of all the misery which makes its career so deplorable. The execution of the sentence of God commenced from its very utterance ; for we are told that God drove out the man from the Garden of Eden, and placed cherubim and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.[3] No symbol of the Scriptures is more remarkable than the cherubim ; and everywhere they appear to be a token of the divine presence. Without departing from the special object of our present enquiry, in an attempt to expound that portion of the sacred record which recounts the expulsion of man from Eden after his sentence ; nothing can be more certain than that the Covenant of Works had ceased to be a means of access to God, and that man by his fall had ceased to be worthy to enjoy, or qualified to use those mercies and blessings which had been unto him, in his estate of innocence, both signs and seals of God's covenanted relations with him. That way of the enjoyment of God's favour was open

[1] Gen., iii. 14. [2] Gen., iii. 17. [3] Gen., iii. 22–24.

only for the innocent ; that method of approach to him was impassible for the guilty. Surely no lesson was ever taught more impressively—surely none can be more obvious to human reason—than that upon the ground of our own righteousness we can have no access to God, unless that righteousness be perfect ; and that as fallen creatures our own righteousness neither is, nor can be, perfect.

6. Just as the promise of deliverance to man was uttered in the divine sentence upon Satan ; so the curse promulged against the earth, was a part of the sentence upon Adam ; cursed is the ground for thy sake.[1] Yet, so far as Adam was concerned, even here is one of those perpetual mitigations which keep up the perpetual remembrance of God's great promise, and of the change wrought by it, in all things. For, though our bread must be eaten in sorrow and toil, produced from ground accursed for our sake ; yet the sweat of our face will, under God's promise, make our bread sure, even out of cursed ground, till we ourselves return to the ground out of which we were taken.[2] Cursed is the serpent, without mitigation or limitation ; and enmity, without limit and without end is denounced between the serpent and the woman, and between his seed and her Seed. Cursed also is the ground ; but only for man's sake, who was of it ; and only so long as sinful man shall abide on it in his sinful condition, and it shall bring forth, of itself, thorns and thistles as a memorial of our fall, and shall bring forth, under our toil, bread for us to eat, as a memorial of God's great promise. This is no more its final, than it was its first condition. For when the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them, God in a survey of their generations, in the day that he made them all, saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good.[3] Its present subjection is not a willing one—but is a sovereign act of God ; nor is it without hope ; and while it lasts the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together ; even the children of God who are the first fruits of the spirit, groaning while they wait for the redemption of the body ; when the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God, in earnest expectation of which manifestation of the sons of God, the creature waiteth.[4] Such is the account given by the Apostle Paul, of the present condition and future deliverance of so much of the creation as

[1] Gen., iii. 17. [2] Gen., iii. 17–19. [3] Gen., i. 31 ; ii. 1–4. [4] Rom., viii. 19–23.

was cursed for man's sake. Touching that glorious deliverance, the Apostle John is still more explicit. When the time shall fully come for the earth and the heaven to flee away from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and who maketh all things new ; then shall there be a new heaven and a new earth, in the room of the first heaven and the first earth, which were passed away, and for which no place shall be found.[1] And the New Jerusalem shall come down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband—and all the wicked shall die the second death—and the Devil shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are—and he that overcometh shall inherit all things—and they which are written in the Lamb's book of life, shall dwell in the city of God, whereof the Lamb himself is the light ![2] It is of no consequence here to enquire, what may be the exact nature, or the whole extent of the things embraced in all these sublime statements. It is impossible for them to mean less, than that whatever is subjected to God's curse for man's sake, will receive a glorious deliverance along with man. It is the same great principle which applies to everything which is subjected in hope ; the same mixed condition—actually before us—of good and evil, to gain the knowledge of which Adam destroyed himself and his race together ; the same misery under sin—even though it be but imputed sin. The earnest expectation of the creature struggling under the burden of the curse and penalty ; the light of God's faithful promise shining brighter and brighter, till the perfect day come ; a universe polluted and under the sentence of God, but with this immeasurable blessing, that it justly expects eternal deliverance !

IV.—1. Seen from the side of reason and nature only, the condition of the universe, which I have endeavored to sketch, presents us with little else than appalling mysteries. But as soon as the light of God's word unfolds everything with its marvellous clearness, even reason and nature are left without any alternative but to reject every testimony, human and divine, or to accept Jesus as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. What reason and nature left to themselves have to expound, is a universe lying under God's curse, without any promise of deliverance. They cannot expound it ; and atheism or superstition is

[1] Rev., xx. 11; xxi. 1.

[2] Rev., xx. *passim*; xxi. *passim*.

their only refuge. The word of God introduces the new and decisive element, which solves these terrible enigmas ; the universe is under the curse of God—but it has working in its frightful abyss of sin and misery, the promise of deliverance through God manifest in the flesh. This is the actual universe which Revelation expounds at the bar of reason and nature, and demands that they examine and believe. Salvation by Jesus Christ, is the irresistible conclusion of the high argument.

2. If it had pleased God to leave our race forever under the full force of the penalty annexed to the Covenant of Works, there is no ground on which his conduct could be impeached, without impeaching at the same time, all his preceding conduct in relation to man ; because—omitting the idea of sovereign grace—that would have been the unavoidable result, as far as we can see, of all the dealings of God with man, whether in creation, in providence, or in covenant. In like manner we should be obliged also to impeach all the subsequent dealings of God with man, even under the Covenant of Grace ; because whatever is absolutely elemental in God's dealing with man in creation, in the first acts of his providence, and in the Covenant of Works, is assumed and avouched by God in the very nature of the Covenant of Grace. If God had thus left man, there were various ways in which the destiny of the human race might have been wrought out, producing various results. God might have proceeded at once to complete judgment and execution—have sent Adam and Eve to perdition—and blotted out the creation which, for man's sake, had fallen under the curse. Or he might have left the terrible penalty to execute itself upon a sinning and dying race, generation after generation, through an eternity of universal pollution and unmitigated wo. Or he might have left this terrific condition to manifest itself under the restraining and directing power of his providence, forever. Or he might have allowed that state of things, for a period limited in its duration ; and might have done this, with or without his restraining and directing providence. Or he might have limited or aggravated without limit, the evils of this condition, by lengthening or shortening the life on earth, either of all men, or of particular individuals ; or by applying in innumerable forms, the resources of his divine authority over his rebellious and depraved creatures, without implying in any case vengeance unworthy of God,

or indulgence undeserved by the creature. And these are but rude suggestions, but obvious possibilities of a condition at once fruitful and awful beyond our poor conceptions, which in the beginning of that estate of all created things now actually existing, came before God to be solved according to the sum of all his infinite perfections, in such a manner as would be most for his own eternal glory.

3. What God actually did, what the effect of the course he took was upon all things, and what as the result the actual position of man and the universe is, it has been the object of this chapter to exhibit in a general manner, according to the word of God; which blessed word has for its main object to explain, to develop, and to enforce the counsel of God touching these immense realities, and as the great result, the glory of God in the salvation of fallen men. On the very ruin of the Covenant of Works, the existence of a better, a more ancient, a more enduring, and in all respects a divine Covenant of Grace was disclosed. A covenant between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, by which provision had been made from eternity for the very casualty upon which God was then administering; and upon every other casualty which could affect the stability of his unalterable purpose to have a seed to serve him, or the glory of his sovereign administration of all things according to the good pleasure of his own will. When we contemplate the whole case together, and estimate our actual condition as affected by both covenants, and as explicated by the sentence of God already pronounced, and the final sentence which he will pronounce at the great day, and by his great promise before his first sentence, and his perpetual fulfilment of it even to his final sentence; it is perfectly obvious that our condition as explained by God himself, is one of actual sin and misery, threatening to end quickly in eternal perdition—but with the glorious promise of a Saviour, who has long ago come into the world, and through whom whosoever will come unto God by him, shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life. This is the divine explanation of the whole case. So much of it as relates personally to each one of us, we have as ample means of determining whether it is true or false, as we have of determining any thing whatever; we may certainly know whether or not we are sinners, whether or not we are miserable; we may certainly know whether or not we are pure, whether or

not we are blessed; we may certainly know whether or not we have any apprehension of being damned, any desire to be saved. As to our whole race, nothing concerning it seems to be more manifest, than that the exact condition which God describes is precisely that which it has always exhibited, that through which it is now passing, and which, so far as we can comprehend, nothing can alter, till Christ who is our life shall appear once more—when all his followers shall appear with him—in glory, and all his enemies shall be swept into endless ruin.

4. In so far as the creatures to be benefitted by the Covenant of Grace, are in a different condition from what they were under the Covenant of Works, the two covenants are necessarily different from each other. But a careful scrutiny of the intimate nature of both covenants, makes it obvious that the Covenant of Works might well proceed from the divine mind, even under the eternal purpose to execute the Covenant of Grace; and when the fall of man annulled the Covenant of Works as a Covenant of Life, every fundamental and indestructible element of it which tended in that direction, was gathered up and made full account of in the Covenant of Grace. The penalty of the Covenant of Works remains, indeed, in full force; but the human race received the promise of a Saviour even before their first sentence under that covenant; so that, in effect, they have never been under the unmitigated fury of that penalty; and never will be until the final sentence of God. No one was ever saved by that covenant, or ever will be; anxious as the wicked, in their folly, pretend to be to commend themselves to God by their pretended good works. On the other hand, we are apparently taught, that no one ever perished eternally, or ever will, under the naked penalty of that covenant, and simply because of original sin; for though it be real sin, and the source of all other sin in us, it is also that form of sin in us which stood side by side with the primeval promise—that *sin of the world* which the Lamb of God so took away, that none will perish eternally merely for it.[1] I do not think any are warranted in saying that infants are damned; that Satan will be permitted to exhibit in hell as a monument of triumph over Jesus Christ, a single soul dragged down to eternal despair, which was originally made in the image of God, and which is free from actual transgressions of its

[1] John, i. 29.

own. The divine remedy against such a catastrophe is complete.

5. The difference between the conduct of God towards Satan and his seed, and that towards the followers of the promised Seed of the woman, is infinitely great. It is not diffcult to see, why the grace of an infinitely merciful God might be extended to fallen man ; and why the full measure of his justice might burn against Satan. Indeed it is hardly possible for us to comprehend how Satan could have been left in the full possession of his terrible triumph over man, without its appearing, in some sort, to involve a triumph over God himself, in the absolute defeat of his purpose in the work of creation, and the frustration of his design in entering into covenant with man. The question becomes far more difficult, when it is so applied as to divide the human race itself. There is no difficulty in seeing why men are finally lost ; none in seeing why they are finally saved ; none in solving all the intermediate questions—in each particular case of a lost or saved soul. It is perfectly clear that without divine grace none can be saved ; that through divine grace any—all, could be saved. It is here that all God has said concerning the seed of Satan on one side, and the followers of the promised Seed of the woman on the other side—confronts us ; yea, so confronts us, that to overlook it, or to explain it away, subverts every thing which is clear in itself, or which makes the condition of the universe, or that of the human race, clear to us. It is, if I may so express it, that portion of the infinitely gracious dealings of God with man, in which his infinite sovereignty makes itself particularly manifest ; and the whole difficulty lies in the fact, that God really acts therein, and has plainly told us he would act, in a manner different from that in which we would act, if we were God. Be it so. He does that in all things. There is no alternative but that we must confide in him, or that he must resign the throne of his universe to us.

6. Every thing depends on divine grace, and turns upon the willingness and sufficiency of the Lord Jesus. For sinners there can be no hope except in grace—for sufferers none except in mercy—for the helpless, none except in him who is able to save. It might be true, or it might not, that Jesus Christ, the sinner's friend, is willing and is able to save us. But it is absolutely certain, so far as the reason of man can reach, and so far

as the history of man has preserved any record of the past, that no one else is, or ever was, either able or willing to do what must be done, in order to save us. Nor is the certainty one whit less, that God neither is, nor ever was, in the least degree inclined to save us, or to allow us to be saved, in any other way, or by any other being, even if both had been possible. How overwhelming, therefore, is the interest of our fallen race—not that the Lord Jesus should be put to shame, and the blessed word which reveals him be confuted—which seems to be the chief desire of all the enemies of God ; but that the reality, the efficacy, and the glory of this great salvation should be established like the foundations of the everlasting mountains !

CHAPTER II.

THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION: GENERAL STATEMENT OF ITS GREAT PRINCIPLES AND TRUTHS.

I. 1. The Disclosure of this Covenant: Precise Conception of it.—2. Jesus Christ the Mediator of this Covenant.—3. The Covenant itself the Result of the Eternal Purpose of God, and the Eternal Counsel of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.—4. The Relevancy of Divine Grace to the Mode of the Divine Existence.—5. Emphatic, with Relation to the Covenant of Redemption.—6. The Scriptural Doctrines of the Trinity and of Salvation by Grace, stand or fall together.—II. 1. The whole Subject one of pure Revelation—2. The Revealed Mode of God's Being, determines the Form of the Eternal Covenant.—3. The Revealed Nature of Salvation does the like.—4. The Relation of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, respectively, to Elect Sinners in the Eternal Covenant.—III. 1. Christ the Covenanted Head of the Redeemed.—2. Otherwise, Salvation is neither promised, nor possible.—3. Need of restoring a truer Method of Statement.—4. Fatalism: Human Freedom: A free Gospel: Common Operations of the Spirit.—5. The Senses in which Believers are in Covenant with God: Participation of the Universe in Covenanted Blessings.—6. Recapitulation of the Primary Conception of the Covenant, as between the Persons of the Godhead: and of its Secondary Conception, as embracing all the Redeemed in Christ, their Head.—7. Practical Appreciation of both these Aspects, indispensable to Man.

I.—1. It is not to the universe, situated as ours now is, that the knowledge of a great deliverance is first disclosed by God; but the actual condition of the universe, as we behold it, is the result of that disclosure made to a universe over which absolute and universal ruin was impending, and in which that disclosure has been perpetually confirmed and augmented throughout the whole life of the human race. It was the infinite purpose of divine mercy, thus disclosed in the very sentence of God, which totally changed the condition of the created universe, as it lay under the penalty of the covenant of works. And what we now behold is the combined result of the fall of man, of the respite until the great day, of the full infliction of the penalty annexed to the covenant of works, of the actual sentence of God, of the great promise of deliverance through the Seed of the woman, of the complete development of that promise in the sacred Scrip-

tures, of the practical manifestation of Redemption itself through every dispensation hitherto exhibited, and of the ceaseless conflict between sin and misery on the one side, and grace and truth on the other. What we have to consider in the survey of all these immense topics is the elemental nature of that eternal purpose of God, and that whole working of God unto the restitution of all things through Jesus Christ our Lord. We express, in its widest sense, the idea in which the whole survey results, by the phrase, *The Covenant of Grace*, because divine grace is the very foundation and significance of the whole : and also by the phrase, *The Covenant of Redemption*, because the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is the vital point of the whole conception of grace unto salvation.

2. If the sacred Scriptures are either the Word of God, or are intelligible to man, then is Jesus of Nazareth the Seed of the woman ; the Seed promised to Abraham, the father of the faithful ; the Messiah of the Old Testament ; the Christ of the New Testament ; the Son of God ; and the Saviour of the world.[1] It is to the effect that Christ is the promised Seed that the whole Scriptures conclude ; and nothing was ever more distinctly asserted by Christ himself than that he is the Messiah.[2] This is the mediator between God and men. Mediator of what, and to what end ? Mediator to the end that God and men may be reconciled ; to the end that man may be saved ; to the end that God may be glorified in the eternal manifestation of his sovereign grace by means of the everlasting blessedness of redeemed sinners. Mediator of a scheme of eternal life proposed to sinners ready to be sentenced to eternal death ; of a plan of salvation for the guilty, and mercy for the suffering ; of redemption for those lying under a fearful penalty, release for those exposed to a terrible curse ; Mediator, in one word, of a covenant of grace, which is also a covenant of redemption. It was to fit him to be the Mediator of this covenant that he became Immanuel, that is, God-man, that he might mediate between God and men. It was as Mediator of this covenant that he was infinitely humiliated, even to the cross ; infinitely exalted, even to the throne of the universe. And every office he executes, whether as the infallible Teacher of all truth, or whether as the

[1] Gen., iii. 15 ; xii. 3, 7 ; xvi. 7 ; Job, vii. 14 ; Matt., i. 23–25 ; Luke, i. 31–35.
[2] Gal., iii. 16 ; iv. 4 ; John, i. 41 ; iv. 26 ; ix. 37.

great High Priest who redeems men, or whether as the sole King of saints, it is still as Mediator of the same eternal covenant. And when he shall come the second time to consummate his infinite work, he will come as the glorified Redeemer, perfecting and then delivering up to the Father the kingdom which this same covenant had contemplated from eternity.

3. It would be wholly impossible to explain any part of the mediatorial office, or character, or worth of Christ, and, therefore, wholly impossible to explain fully any part of the actual mode of salvation proposed in the Scriptures; without being led immediately to the divine nature, and the divine purpose, and the result of both as exhibited in the conception and execution of salvation by a Redeemer; which result is, the covenant of redemption. This is inevitable in the nature of the case. But besides this, which the whole Scriptures not only recognize, but assert; the Lord Jesus habitually and continually discloses the intimate participation of the Father and the Holy Ghost in all his work, in all that preceded it, and in all its results. In all his teaching, nothing is more frequently reiterated than that in all things he was executing the purpose of the Father: in all his promises, nothing is more emphatic than that in all things the Holy Ghost would consummate his work. So deeply is this participation of all the persons of the Godhead imbedded in the scriptural conception of the way of salvation, that there is a most distinct passing over from one divine person to another, as the sacred record advances in its sublime disclosures of salvation itself. First, it is God simply considered; then it is the Son, who does all in the name of the Father; then it is the Holy Ghost, who does all in the name of the Son. Great, therefore, as is the certainty that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world; the certainty is just as great that God the Father, and God the Holy Ghost co-operate in all his glorious work; and that salvation is the result of the eternal purpose of God, and of the concurrence of all the persons of the Godhead. This is expressed by the phrase, The Covenant of Redemption.

4. There can be no doubt that, if salvation is of divine grace, it must be of him who is God, and can be of none else. Whatever is not God, is wholly impotent as a source of divine grace: whatever is God, is divinely competent as a source of divine grace. If there are three Gods, there must be three distinct

sources; if there be but one God, there can be but one source. But if the mode in which the unity of the infinite essence of the only and true God subsists and acts be a threefold personality, then each of these three persons must concur in every act and purpose of this single and infinite essence, and, therefore, must concur in every act and purpose of divine grace. And whatever ineffable counsels, or mutual intuition, or inbeing, or intercourse with and between the three persons of the one God upon any subject whatever, or in relation to any purpose or act whatever, can be supposed to be real or to be possible; the very same as a possibility and as a reality, lies at the foundation of the divine purpose and concurrence in that divine grace which saves sinners through a Redeemer. But this, again, is the Covenant of redemption.

5. It is easy to understand that every divine purpose and concurrence must conform to the absolute nature of God, and must be wrought out in a manner answerable to that nature. What is thus true universally, must be true, in a most emphatic sense, of that sublime purpose and concurrence of salvation by grace, which the sacred Scriptures, through which alone we know anything about either grace or salvation, teach us is the highest manifestation of the glory of God, and therefore the highest exhibition of his nature and his perfections. If it is true, therefore, that God exists in an absolute unity of essence, but that the mode of that unity is a threefold personality; then it is infallibly certain, that if there are any sinners in the universe, and God should save any of them, he will do it in a manner answerable to such a nature. Now the Scriptures teach us that there are sinners in the universe, that God does save some of them, that he does this through a Covenant of Redemption, based upon that very mode of the divine existence, and that, in fine, such is the exact mode in which God does exist; all of which I have proved at large in a former Treatise. This being true, upon the only authority which is infallible upon the question under consideration; nothing is left but to admit the eternal purpose and concurrence of the one living and true God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to save lost sinners through divine grace—which is the Covenant of Redemption; or else to reject the sacred Scriptures, in which alone is found either this great doctrine of salvation, or this great doctrine of the divine existence.

6. To that issue the earnest seeker after truth will always come, first or last. And if he be an earnest seeker after truth, that issue is soon settled. It is an issue I cannot follow here; its consideration belongs to another department of our great subject. I may observe, however, that the mode of the divine existence which must be true, if the plan of salvation taught in the Scriptures is either divine or efficacious; is a mode of that existence which so far from being capable of taking its origin from human conjecture, is really not capable of being taught or understood except in connection with the plan of salvation which is responsive to it. It is not systematically revealed except in connection with that plan; it is not a speculation of philosophy capable of being thought out; it is a sublime result set before us in a lost soul saved—and educed by God himself, concerning himself, teaching and saving side by side. Blot out all we know about salvation, and then see what it is we know about the doctrine of the Trinity, and the eternal counsel of God. Or blot out the doctrine of the Trinity and of the Covenant of Redemption, and then see what it is we know about salvation for lost sinners. It seems to me that such transcendent abstract truths, and such overwhelming practical results, with the intense and inseparable connection between them, make a system which transcends human imposture.

II.—1. According to the Scriptures, salvation is by the grace of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, by means of the work of the Holy Ghost within us.[1] If the Scriptures be rejected, then there is no knowledge of the grace of God, nor any knowledge of faith in Christ, nor any knowledge of any work of the Holy Ghost, left upon earth. But in that case, we have also lost all true conception both of what salvation is, and of what is the exact nature of our own terrible condition; and are left to the fearful dominion of sin and death, under which the goadings of our depraved conscience and reason, fleeing from despair, drive us to atheism or to superstition—the only refuges for man without the Bible. We cannot repeat it to ourselves too often, that sinners cannot be saved without a Saviour; that man left to himself cannot even conceive a way of saving himself which his own reason will accept till, it is blinded by his consuming religious wants; that the whole subject of deliverance for sinners lies

[1] Eph., ii. 4–10; John, i. 1–20; 1 Cor., i. 21–24.

merely in the bosom of God ; and that his divine revelation of the manner of it, and the fact of it, is a revelation of that which lies wholly out of the range of natural knowledge. We must accept the manner of the divine deliverance, and the fact of it together ; or we must reject them together. In one terrible sense they may be both rejected ; and I have just pointed out the result thereof. In a still higher sense, their rejection is no longer possible. For these sublime ideas once revealed to man, cannot afterwards perish. Their very existence among men is a decisive proof of a divine revelation ; the clearness with which, notwithstanding their vastness and their remoteness from human thinking, they still make their way into the human understanding, is an equally decisive proof of their absolute truth ; and their transforming power in the soul of man raises up through all generations such living monuments of divine grace, that the fact of the divine revelation, the truth of its heavenly matter, and the efficacy of the great deliverance it makes known, become just as palpable as that man is a sinner, or that he will perish if left to himself.

2. The Scriptures being accepted as a revelation of the way of life, and their divine statements as to the manner thereof being accepted in their simple and full sense ; then grace, and faith, and a spiritual life, become the grandest realities, carrying us backward into eternity, inward to the depths of the human soul, and forward to endless glory. God considered in his essence and totality, and each person of the Godhead, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, sometimes either one, sometimes either two, sometimes all three Persons ; these, in endless repetition, become the themes of revelation touching the deliverance promised to man, and touching the way thereof. The poverty of all languages prevents the reproduction of the immense richness with which Jehovah has made himself known to the earliest ages, by means of the numerous names by which he revealed himself : that primeval form of permanent revelation of which I have treated specially in another place. Nevertheless, the sacred word is so replenished with the knowledge of the living God, that the divine truth most deeply seated therein, is that the God of Israel is one God. And yet the very first recorded utterance of this glorious God concerning man was, Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* like-

ness ;[1] and he prefaced man's expulsion from the Garden of Eden by the wonderful declaration, Behold the man is become as *one of us*, to know good and evil.[2] Before either of those statements, the Spirit of God brooded over the chaos at creation ; and the omnific Word by whom all things were created, spoke before all great creative acts.[3] Now it is not in order to prove the manner of the divine existence, nor the manner of the divine manifestation founded on that manner of existence, both of which I have treated at large elsewhere, that these great topics are made fundamental here. But it is to point out in that manner of existence, and that manner of manifestation, both of which are most conspicuous of all in the salvation of fallen sinners of the human race, and in the manner thereof ; the unavoidable needs be, either of a wholly independent action on the part of God, and then of each Divine Person in the Godhead—or else of that eternal counsel and concurrence in the whole Godhead, of which the work of God, and of each Divine Person is the result. By the former alternative, there must be four divine wills, and therefore, four Gods, which, beyond all question, the Scriptures do not teach. By the latter alternative, there can be but one divine will of one living God, in whose undivided essence three divine Persons subsist ; which unquestionably the Scriptures do teach. But from this there results inevitably, out of the revealed manner of the divine existence, and the revealed and actual manner of its manifestation in all things, and especially in Redemption, that eternal Covenant between the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost which is the outbirth of God's eternal counsel, and whose outworkings are seen in the whole Plan of Salvation.

3. There are, therefore, two perfectly distinct lines of enquiry, by either, or by both of which, the reality and the nature of the Covenant of Redemption between the persons of the Godhead in eternity, and from eternity, are capable of being made just as certain as the reality and nature of salvation itself. One of these is the testimony of the Scriptures themselves ; wherein are innumerable statements revealing to man the counsel, will, purpose, and Covenant of God concerning his salvation, and concerning the whole reason, cause, design, ground, manner, end, and object thereof. The other lies in the facts distinctly

[1] Gen., i. 26. [2] Gen., iii. 22. [3] Gen., i. 1–26; John, i. 1–5.

held forth—the effects of that counsel and covenant distinctly produced and recorded as such, and the consequences, results, and products thereof reproduced upon the soul, and with the intimate knowledge of man; from which effects, to wit, from the recorded acts of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and from the results of those effects in us, for example, our regeneration, we are able to infer, and are obliged to infer, a cause antecedent to those divine acts, to wit, the counsel of God, and its product, the Covenant of Redemption. Both of these lines of enquiry terminate in the same manner, and upon the same conclusion, summarily exhibited in the following statements: The sole foundation of the sinner's hope lies in the sovereign grace of God: The word of God is a Revelation of that grace and of the manner of it: The manner of it in its first and most general form, is a covenant from eternity between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to save, by the work of each, with the concurrence of all, every sinner of the human race, whom God purposes to save.[1] It is a covenant infinitely sure,[2] everlasting,[3] absolute,[4] and filled with all spiritual blessings to true believers in Christ.[5]

4. In this Covenant of Redemption, the Lord Jesus Christ is the covenanted head of all the elect of God. Whatever grace they can receive in time, and whatever glory in eternity, both are lodged in this eternal covenant, and settled on them by its terms, only in him whose participation in it was the participation of their head, their Lord, their Redeemer, their elder brother; in like manner as the participation of the Father in it, was the participation of their God and Father; and the participation of the Holy Ghost, was the participation of their New Creator, Comforter, and Sanctifier.[6] God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.[7]. And it is this amazing love which the Father has bestowed on us, and through which God calls us his sons; that is the remotest cause of our receiving in this world, all the privileges of sons of God, and in the life to come, the incomprehensible weight of glory which is

[1] Ps. lxxxix. 3–28; Eph., i. 3, 4; 2 Tim., i. 9. [2] Isa., iv. 3.
[3] Isa., lxi. 8. [4] Jer., xxxii. 38–40. [5] Eph., i. 5.
[6] Rom., viii. 28–39; xvi. 25, 26; Eph., i. *passim;* iii. 9–12; 2 Tim., i. 7–10; Titus, i. 2; 1 Peter, i. 20. [7] John, iii. 16.

involved in the fruition of the glorified Redeemer as he is, and in our being like him.[1] The sum of the record is, that God hath given to us eternal life; that this life eternal is in the Son of God; that whosoever hath the Son, hath life; and that he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.[2] Such are the very words of God. On the other hand, the participation of the Son in this eternal covenant, and his concurrence alike in it, and in the counsel, the purpose, and the decree of God, and his whole work of Redemption as the consequence thereof, and as the Mediator of that covenant; is the very burden of the sacred Scriptures.[3] The grace which is held forth in this covenant is the grace of God, in which, as in the covenant itself, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost alike participate. The infinite Beneficence of God, which, as far as we can understand, or the Scriptures instruct us, is that divine perfection from which springs all divine grace to fallen sinners of mankind, is a perfection of the Godhead in its essence, and, like all such perfections, it appertains alike and equally to each Divine Person. The same thing is true of the divine Wisdom and Power in their relation to this divine covenant, and its execution. At the same time, the Personality of the Godhead is no more to be excluded with reference to that covenant, and its execution, than the Unity thereof is; nay, it is in these sublime manifestations of God that we are so precisely taught that the mode of that Unity of essence is truly expressed only by the subsistence of a threefold Personality therein. Specifically, then, the office of the Father in relation to this covenant, is the manifestation of that sovereign and eternal purpose of God to have a seed to serve him, which was exhibited concerning the whole race of man, by the Covenant of Works, and all that preceded it; which was exhibited, in another form, in pronouncing sentence upon the breach of the Covenant of Works, wherein the distinction in the race itself is first set forth by God in connection with his promise of deliverance; and which was fully exhibited in the form of eternal, unchanging, and electing love, and in that form lodged in the bosom of this covenant, for the infinite glory of God and the endless blessedness of the inheritors of eternal life under the covenant itself. When we

[1] 1 John, iii. 1, 2.

[2] 1 John, v. 11, 12.

[3] John, i. 1–14; Rom., v. *passim;* Luke, i. 26–55; 1 Cor., xv. *passim;* Gal., iv. 3–7; Phil., ii. 5–13.

encountered the first manifestation of the eternal purpose of God to deal with devils and men differently—and to deal with the human race itself with reference to a final judgment in which that race would be eternally separated into two parts, I called attention distinctly to the overwhelming facts so deeply influential upon the condition and destinies of the universe, and so fundamental in the very structure of the Word of God. We encounter once more a new proof, in a still more precise form, of this eternal purpose of God. For my own part, I am not able to understand the Scriptures otherwise; nor am I able to understand upon what ground it is possible for us to assert that they would be more rational, more credible, more honourable to God, or more in accordance with all we know of him, of ourselves, and of the universe, independently of what we learn from them, if they had taught differently on these vast topics. Undoubtedly there is an end of all salvation promised in the Scriptures, unless it is secured in the Covenant of Redemption. Undoubtedly the eternal purpose of God, and the electing and unalterable love of the Father, are as rational and as exalted motives and grounds upon which sovereign grace could be alleged to distinguish its objects in a race of sinners, as any others which the poor cavils of men have suggested. So it is, that the Son does engage to take flesh—become Immanuel, and so Mediator between God and men, under this covenant, and in all his work of humiliation and exaltation to bring in, and to work out, an everlasting righteousness; not, assuredly, for the benefit of the seed of Satan, the finally impenitent, the just objects of the aversion of God and the Father; but, assuredly, for the benefit of all fallen sinners of the human race, whom God hath purposed to save, and whom the Father had loved with that wondrous love in Christ Jesus, from which neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate the objects of it.[1] In the same manner the Holy Ghost, the third Person of the adorable Trinity, participating and concurring in all divine acts and counsels, has a special office with reference to the Covenant of Redemption. He is the Author of that New Creation of which Christ is the head, and of which every particular member is in covenant with God

[1] Rom., viii. 33–39; Gal., iii. 16; Isa., lix. 21; Zech., vi. 13; Luke, xxii. 29.

through Christ their covenant head. It is the divine Spirit who enables them and inclines them, to believe to the saving of their souls, and to repent of sin, and forsake it. Whatever concerns the complete execution of this divine covenant, and the efficacious application of it to the redeemed, appertains to the participation of the divine Spirit, in the covenant itself, and to his divine office with reference thereto.[1] Precisely as the office of the Son herein has special relation to the office of the Father, so the office of the Spirit has special relation to the office of the Son. The objects of the Father's love are redeemed by the Son; and those redeemed by the Son are regenerated by the Spirit. I have used the word *special*, because the Scriptures do not permit us to do otherwise with reference to the whole concatenation of this amazing exhibition of the nature, the counsel, and the grace of God.[2] And thus, according to the revelation which God has given to man, salvation for sinners, so far from being that casual, uncertain, or indeterminate thing, which men are so prone to consider it; is, in reality, the most wondrous manifestation of God. Whatever effect may be produced upon the universe, or upon devils or men, or upon particular portions of either individually considered, there, absolutely considered, is an exhibition of the divine nature, the divine character, and the divine plans, transcendently wonderful and efficacious—perfectly distinct after God has revealed all unto us, yet utterly remote from any thing which could ever have been suggested by the natural thinking of the human soul. In its sum, it is the revelation of the eternal Covenant of Grace for the Redemption of the elect of God, through Jesus Christ, by the work of the Holy Ghost; of the whole of which natural thinking knows nothing, and to which nature furnishes no clue. So far as nature is concerned, it is a new, a distinct, and is indeed the very highest manifestation of the glory of God.

III.—1. I shall not repeat here the general discussion of the doctrine of covenants, which has been very carefully drawn out in treating of the covenant of works in the *First Part of Theology*. It becomes us, however, to be fully aware of what the Scriptures teach, and of the sense in which we understand their teaching, concerning the reality and the effect of headship of

[1] Ezek., xxxvi. 26, 27; John, vi. 37–44; Gal., v. 22, 23.

[2] John, xvi. 7–16; 1 Tim., iii. 16; Rom., i. 4; John, xv. 26.

the Son over the elect of God, in the Covenant of Redemption. The headship of Adam, both natural and federal, seems to me to be taught with perfect clearness in the Scriptures : and, moreover, if it were otherwise, the Scriptures would afford us no solution of the actual condition of the human race, and, therefore, no complete solution either of the way of salvation, or of salvation itself. But the Scriptures, in innumerable places and ways, illustrate our recovery by our fall ; and do not hesitate to run parallels, for this purpose, between Adam and Christ by name ; nay, they expressly call Christ the second Adam, in their anxiety to make us comprehend how the first Adam, who was a living soul, was a figure of the second Adam, who was a quickening spirit and the Lord from heaven.[1] The Son of God, therefore, is as really the Head of the redeemed, both by covenant and by a supernatural regeneration ; as the first man Adam was the head of the human race, both by covenant and by natural generation. It is of no consequence now, and to this proof, whether the human race, and the redeemed, be or be not, absolutely and numerically co-incident. If they are, all are redeemed ; if they are not—as we know they are not—the lost are not redeemed. But if the redeemed are embraced in the covenant of redemption, in Christ their covenant and supernatural Head, as the whole race was embraced in the Covenant of Works, in Adam their covenanted and natural head : it is as wholly inevitable that the redeemed must share the fate of their head, as that the race must share the fate of their head. Such is the overwhelming demonstration drawn out repeatedly by the Scriptures themselves ; confirmed by innumerable separate declarations scattered through the Word of God, and practically illustrated throughout all generations, as the human race has exhibited its connection with Adam, and the redeemed of the Lord taken out of the bosom of that race have exhibited their connection with Christ.

2. It is no doubt very common to reject the teachings of the Scriptures, or to obscure them, concerning the Covenant of Works and the fall of man. It is also very common to reject their teachings, or to obscure them, concerning the Covenant of Grace and the recovery of man. We ought, however, to reflect that our complete success in such undertakings could not miti-

[1] 1 Cor., xv. 45–50 ; Rom., v. *passim*.

gate a single evil of the fall, and could destroy nothing but the hope of the redeemed. Our very highest success terminates in this, that having abolished the Covenant of Redemption, we are left without Christ, and, therefore, without God, and without hope in the world. For how are we to be made partakers of Christ, except by means of his redeeming us? And how is he to redeem us, except as Mediator between God and men? And how is he to mediate, when the very ground, authority, and power to mediate, as well as the chief end and object of the mediation itself, are abolished by nullifying the covenant of grace and redemption? Who has any right to talk about grace after God is refused the right to stipulate concerning his own sovereign grace, and finds his veracity assailed when he says he has done so for his own glory? Who has any right to make mention of redemption, after the Son of God is refused liberty to covenant for his own brethren in his own shed blood, unless he will treat all the seed of Satan precisely as he treats all the elect of God? If it is said, there are no elect of God; that is merely returning by a short way to the same subversion of the covenant, and of grace and salvation with it, only it is less respectful to God, who has said a thousand times there are elect of him: and it is immediately fatal to man, since it is certain that if God does not choose us, we shall never choose him.

3. There are questions which produce extreme embarrassment to our limited faculties, connected with every possible view we can take of the great problems of God and man. Many of these are questions which serious minds cannot escape; many others are questions which candid minds cannot solve to their own entire satisfaction, much less to that of others. There is no need, however, to increase either the number or the difficulty of such questions by our own undocile ignorance and obstinate self-conceit. Concerning all such questions as rise high enough to exhibit a double solution—one when viewed from the divine side of them, and another when viewed from the human side of them—I have expressed my sense of their nature, their effects, and their proper treatment, at the close of the former Treatise. Those which merely present difficulties in reaching any clear solution, at all, are either such as in their nature are out of the range of our intelligence, or such as being within that range are not explicable in the present state of our knowledge. It is

under this last description, perhaps, that we should class most of those difficulties which we experience with regard to questions incidentally connected with the great topics discussed in this chapter. The whole subject, fundamental as it is, had passed away from the preaching, from the religious literature, almost from the dogmatic teaching of the first third of this century. No wonder that there should arise difficulties in restoring it to its fundamental position; difficulties mainly produced by the errors which had occupied the place of these immense truths. And thus, whenever that state of case is present, such difficulties as the following naturally enough arise: Is not this fatalism? Is there any room for human freedom here? Any for a free Gospel? Any for the common operations of the Spirit? Let us examine them.

4. If by fatalism we mean the uncontrollable dominion of an infinite personal God over the created universe, and the absolute dependence of man, both as a creature and a sinner upon God, both as his Creator and Redeemer; then we have given a very absurd name to the system of the universe which actually exists, and which is clearly exhibited in nature, in providence, and in revelation. When we conceive of fate as subordinate to God, what we mean by fate, if we mean any thing, is divine providence: when we conceive of fate as superior to God himself, if we mean any thing, it is that fate is God, and that God is providence. The very idea of fate disappears from a spiritual system administered by an infinite, personal, sovereign God; and although such a system might be conceived of as presented under innumerable aspects, and as administered in innumerable ways, the absolute dominion of God and the absolute dependence of the creature on God, are necessarily inherent in every aspect and every way. Of all conceivable systems, the one I have been attempting to develop most thoroughly excludes every conception of fate.—As to our personal freedom, considered in itself, there can be no question with man of the existence of that of which each one is conscious, and without which we are not able to conceive that virtue, morality, duty, reward, or, on the other hand, vice, sin, punishment, which are the highest realities, could exist at all. But it is a freedom which must consist with all the past, all the actual, all the future of our being: which must exist and operate in such a way as accords with our

entire dependence on God, and his infinite dominion over us. Existing as fallen creatures, our moral freedom, as such, is recognized and respected in the whole manner of our restoration; or more truly speaking, our moral bondage is broken and we are set free in Jesus Christ. To such as are not restored in Christ, assuredly no violence is offered: and they have the same evidence of moral freedom in rejecting the Saviour, that they have of the existence of moral freedom itself. It is remarkable that only they who reject Christ exhibit a sensitiveness about encroachments upon human freedom in divine grace, from which the subjects of that grace are wholly free. They ought to reflect that the efficacy of salvation by grace within the human soul depends on the power of God, and not on the freedom of the depraved soul; and that, in the nature of the case, it is obvious that when the nature of man is changed, all that appertains to that nature, whether intellect, conscience, will, or whatsoever, incurs a corresponding change, each after its own kind. So that the real difficulty is, not that our moral freedom is violated, which it never is; but that God will not violate it so as to save us against our will; but leaves us in our boasted freedom, to perish for our sins, or to save ourselves if we can.—Touching the freedom of the Gospel offer, nothing can be more certain than that salvation is to be freely, sincerely, urgently proclaimed to the whole family of man; proclaimed as infinitely worthy of all acceptation, and as the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes it. But, at the same time, it is perfectly certain that innumerable multitudes have always despised and rejected it; that they do so still; and that doing so, they perish. Now in what manner can it affect all these questions, to ascertain and point out the grounds upon which men accept the Gospel, and are saved; or those upon which they reject it, and are ruined? Whether the explanation is true or false, is immaterial to the other question. God reserves to himself the sovereign power by which the Gospel is made efficacious: he also reserves, till the opening of the Lamb's Book of Life, the publication of the names of the redeemed. Through all time, they who will perish and they who will be saved, pass together through this state of trial: the Word of God, which is the infallible source of knowledge, and rule of faith and obedience to all, is open to all; and all the means of grace and salvation ad-

ministered by men utterly ignorant of the sovereign purpose of God touching individual persons, are exhibited before all, and are accessible to all. It is unquestionably true that God knows from eternity the exact result of each particular thing, and of all things. But this is equally true of all possible systems ; so that absolutely considered, none could effect any thing but that which God designed it should effect : and, therefore, in the sense of the difficulty I am now considering, the real cavil is against God himself, for offering salvation generally when he knew it would be accepted only specially. But they who thus cavil ought to reflect that, after all, the offer of salvation in its freest form is always conditional, and the conditions always a part of the offer : that if these simple and unalterable conditions are performed by any, only because God inclines and enables them, that is one more proof of the nature and reality of that covenant which I have exhibited ; whereas, the inability or the refusal, no matter which, of men to believe in Christ, and to forsake sin, as the conditions of salvation, and their neglect or refusal, no matter which, to ask Christ for that inclination and ability which he has promised to give if they will ask him, clearly prove the utter futility of all mere offers of salvation to lost men. In effect, the real difficulty is the same as in the former questions ; the right of God to treat devils and men differently ; the right of God, having reserved his grace for fallen man, to make any discrimination between them ; the right, after being rejected by all, to save any through sovereign grace. It is not to be concealed that, if this can be denied to God, the sacred Scriptures can no longer be vindicated as a revelation of his will ; nor can the salvation in which his people rejoice be considered more than a vain and empty delusion.—The difficulty founded on what are called the common operations of the divine Spirit—those operations, whatever they may be, which come short of perfecting in the human soul the work of salvation wrought out by Christ ; arises from overlooking the intimate relation of the work of the Spirit to the work of Christ, which I have before pointed out. It is inconsistent with the nature of the Covenant of Redemption, and with the office of each divine Person in it, and with innumerable statements of the sacred Scriptures, to rob the purpose, and counsel, and plan of God of its sovereign unity. The Son does nothing as Mediator irrespective of the

eternal love of the Father; and the Spirit does nothing as the author of the New Creation irrespective of the mediatorial work of the Son. Out of Christ, there is no grace of God for sinners, nor any work of the Spirit of God in sinners; and sinners have no relation to the Covenant of Redemption irrespective of Christ their covenant Head; the gift of the only begotten Son of God being the foundation of every other divine gift. All those representations, therefore, which set forth the work of Christ as indeterminate, and leave the grace of God to flow still more indeterminately, and the work of the Spirit to proceed in the same manner; involve not only the subversion of the Covenant of Redemption, and the substitution of a way of salvation utterly repudiated by the Scriptures; but they involve, logically, the existence of three separate and independent divine wills, and, therefore, three Gods: or else the subjection of the separate will of the Son, and the separate will of the Spirit, to the supreme will of the Father, and, therefore, the existence of but one divine person, to wit, the Father. In effect, there are common operations of the Spirit; but they are not irrespective of Christ: on the contrary, they are absolutely relevant to him. Every mercy of God does not terminate in salvation; every benefit conferred by Christ does not ensure salvation; every work of the Spirit does not fit us for salvation. It is the glory and blessedness only of such as love God, such as are the called according to his purpose, that all things work together for their good. Whatever comes short of salvation, may, without objection, be called *common;* and in the immense benefits of this kind which are conferred by Christ upon the unthankful and disobedient, and which do not secure their salvation, we have at once the key, the ground, and the measure, of those common operations of the Spirit which come short of salvation. Surely, there is no occasion either to deny their reality, or to undermine the foundations of our hope in order to allow them.

5. In our English version of the New Testament Scriptures, the same Greek word* is rendered both *covenant* and *testament.* The word of itself undoubtedly has both significations; and when Messiah sealed with his blood the covenant to which, as the Son, he was a party in eternity, all the blessings of redemption which had always been in him covenant mercies

* Διαθήκη.

to believers, became thenceforward testamentary devises of the Saviour to his followers. He gave the cup to his Apostles, and said, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament (διαθήκης) which is shed for many for the remission of sins.[1] There are also two senses in which this covenant is truly called a covenant between God and believers. For, in the first place, every believer was really embraced in it, in his covenant head, the Lord Christ. And, in the second place, every believer in his personal union with Christ, in his new creation by the Holy Ghost, wherein he accepts, receives and relies upon Christ for salvation, enters personally into covenant to take God to be his God, and Christ to be his Saviour, whom he engages, through grace by faith, to follow in a new obedience;[2] and God accepts him, in covenant, and seals to him the blessings and benefits of the Covenant of Redemption.[3] Nor is the universe itself, which was cursed for man's sake, to be excluded from its share in the blessedness of man's redemption. The Lord Jesus declared in the most emphatic manner, that his crucifixion was the crisis of all things; that by means of it the ruin of Satan, the judgment of this world, and the universality of his own dominion, would be established.[4] And it is the constant doctrine of the Scriptures, that all things are to be restituted in Jesus Christ, and that the whole creation, which groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.[5] There is no need of discussing cosmical questions of any sort here. He who created all things, will restore all things which have been deranged or polluted by the entrance of sin through the fall of man; and that creation which he pronounced, in the survey of the whole of it, to be very good, will emerge from its long bondage under corruption, purged by fire, a new heavens and a new earth, more glorious than the old. All the enemies of God shall be put under the feet of the glorified Redeemer; death shall die, and hell shall be the prison-house of Satan and his seed. As for man, he shall be exalted inconceivably above his primeval condition, inconceivably beyond all to which it was possible for him to have attained under the Covenant of Works. In con-

[1] Matt., xxvi. 28; Rom., ix. 4; Eph., ii. 12; Gal., iv. 24.
[2] Isa., lix. 21; Gal., iii. 16–21.
[3] Ezek., xxxvi. 26, 27; John, vi. 37–44.
[4] John, xii. 23–33.
[5] Acts, iii. 19–21; Rom., viii. 19–23.

nection with him, the highest glory of God in his being, his perfections, and his works, will be illustrated forever; and his own blessedness and renown are carried so high as to be expressed by saying, he shall be made partaker of the divine nature.[1] As far as it is permitted that we should judge, the objects which are embraced in this stupendous covenant are worthy of the means it employs; and it is impossible to doubt that those means are infinitely efficacious to their end. It is in the light of these means and their efficacy, these objects and their nature, this end and its transcendent glory—in one word, of this Covenant of Redemption, that the whole word of God, and our personal share in the grace it reveals, become distinct to the humble follower of Christ. It is in the absence of that light that the children of God stagger through life under a load of tormenting doubts and fears, and are saved at last, as it were, by fire.

6. Primarily, therefore, and in its great elemental sense, the Covenant of Grace or Redemption is a covenant from eternity, between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the restitution of all things from the effects of the fall of man; the realization, in thought, of the eternal purpose, counsel, and concurrence of the Godhead, and the three persons thereof, as the whole is revealed in the sacred Scriptures; in general, for the infinite glory of God and, in particular, for the eternal blessedness of sinners of the human race, chosen of God, redeemed by Christ, and effectually called unto salvation by the Holy Ghost. The plan of salvation revealed in the Scriptures is the complete realization, in time, of this eternal covenant. The Scriptures are a complete disclosure of it, so far as is needful for our salvation. The Kingdom of God in this world is the manifestation of it, from age to age, in time; and when time is done, the triumphant Kingdom of Saints in glory will manifest it completely and forever. Secondarily, and in a subordinate sense, it is a covenant between God and every sinner saved by grace: because all such were represented by Christ, their federal head, in the covenant itself; and being, in due time, supernaturally regenerated by the Holy Ghost, they come actually into covenant with God, through Christ. It is they who make up the mystical body of Christ. They constitute that true Kingdom of God which is sometimes called the Messianic Kingdom, with reference to its head; some-

[1] 2 Peter, i. 4.

times, the New Creation, with reference to its author; most generally, the Church of God, with reference to themselves. They are the heirs of all the promises, and for them is laid up in heaven an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, which shall never pass away.

7. There are, then, two sufficiently distinct aspects of this amazing covenant. On the one hand, as it is divinely exhibited to us in the Mediator of it, working out our salvation; preceded by the eternal purpose, counsel, and acts of God, which resulted in his incarnation and sacrifice; and followed by the mission and work of the Holy Ghost, applying to men the whole work of Christ. On the other hand, as we behold man and the application to him of the blessings and benefits of that covenant. At first, wholly depraved, and a child of wrath; yet still susceptible through the power of God of restoration to him. Then, awakened by the Spirit of God to a sense of his true condition; yet still perverse, stupid, and rebellious. Then, born again, from above, and of the Spirit; yet weak, frail, erring, and very slow of heart to believe. At last, closing his career of sin, and pardon, and deliverance, in peace, perhaps in triumph. Now it behooves us to realize these two distinct aspects of this great subject—this divine and this human element of our destiny. Both of these are to be made full account of in all our endeavours to comprehend the ways of God towards man, in all our efforts to keep our hearts in his fear and love. If we exalt the human element too much, then we lose sight of the infinite need of divine grace, and fall into presumptuous estimates of our own ability to something good; and if we weaken it too much, we lose that pungent sense of responsibility, and that deep impression of duty, which it is one of the noblest offices of the Gospel to enlighten and to exalt. On the other hand, the least weakening of the divine element, no matter in what way, is immediately fatal; and every error on that side immediately reacts and produces a corresponding and fatal error on the other side. Nothing can be more absurd than to suppose that religion in its very nature, consists merely of emotions; unless it is more absurd to suppose that such emotions as God would recognize as constituting true religion, can exist independently of true knowledge of him. It is true that mere knowledge is not religion; but it is

more emphatically true that neither ignorance nor error is religion. But what is most important is, that ignorance and error separate us from God precisely in proportion as they exist; while God himself has told us, that to know him, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, is eternal life.[1]

[1] John, xvii. 3.

CHAPTER III.

RELATION OF THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION, TO THE INNER LIFE OF MAN, AND TO HIS FUNDAMENTAL RELIGIOUS CONVICTIONS.

I.—1. The Will of God is the Rule of Duty to Man considered as a Creature.—2. The Rule of Duty to Fallen Creatures for whom God provides a Saviour, is the Will of that Saviour.—3. Precise relation of the Revealed Way of Salvation, to the nature of Religion, and of Man. II.—1. Salvation for Sinners, through sovereign Grace.—2. Comparative Statement of their Condition—and the Remedy.—3. Comparative Statement of the Moral Impotence, and the Moral Susceptibility of Fallen Man.—4. This Condition of Fallen Man, the Covenant of Redemption, and the actual Process of Salvation mutually illustrated.—5. The Sovereignty of God and the Dependence of the Creature, universal in all things, are emphatic in Grace unto Salvation.—6. Divine Grace rendered effectual, only through our personal Redemption.—7. That personal Redemption made available to us, not by our act, but by the work of God's Spirit. III.—1. The most remote reasons of our personal Salvation.—2. The most remote reasons of the failure of personal Salvation to be universal.—3. On one side an illustration of God's infinite Perfections beyond the Covenant; on the other of his infinite Perfections within the Covenant; on both the display of his infinite Nature.—4. Restatement of Redeeming Love, in its method, and in its results.

I.—1. If there were no God, there could be no religion; and, in that case, the existence of a moral conscience in man would be the most inscrutable of all the wonders of his being. It would be the precise response of our nature to our Creator; when, in reality, there was no such thing as a Creator. To say that we have an understanding—and then deny that there is any such thing as truth—is less absurd than to say we have a conscience—and then deny the existence of the very object of that conscience. As to our having a religious nature, it is just as certain as that we have any nature at all. But the sense of our dependence on God, and the sense of our responsibility to God, are the deepest manifestations of that religious nature; precisely as the fact of that dependence and the fact of that accountability, are the deepest foundations of religion itself. And so in the nature of the case, to which our own nature responds, we are to direct all

our actions, not according to our own pleasure, but according to the will of God. And this obligation, which is in some sort the very essence of all religion, is equally binding upon every creature of God, that is capable of knowing him.

2. Every thing which separates between God and man—sin in all its forms—is abnormal, that is, unnatural to man as he was created by God. Sin places man in a new relation to God; but still leaving him the creature of God, it neither releases him from the dominion of God, nor from his dependence on God. The obligation to regulate all his actions by the will of God, still continues in full force, while his ability and his desire to do so are both lost, and his sense of obligation to do so deprives him of all peace in his sins. The way of access to God for sinless creatures is open and clear, and they have light and strength to walk therein. But to sinful creatures, nature affords no access to God, and reason discloses none, except merely that they may come and be condemned. That any form of religion should be effectual in restoring a sinful creature to the favour of God, it must, therefore, be supernaturally revealed, it must contemplate him as a sinner, it must deliver him from condemnation for his sins, and it must restore to him both the desire and the ability to conform his actions to the will of God. In effect, this has been done through a Saviour. A new relation has been established between God and fallen men, considered not merely as creatures, nor merely as sinful creatures, but as sinful creatures still capable of restoration and of salvation. It is a relation of grace on one side and faith on the other, superadded to the relation of dominion on one side and dependence on the other, which existed before. The fundamental principle of this religion for sinners must necessarily be, dependence on the Saviour revealed to him by God. And the essential principle which has been shown to lie at the basis of all religion assumes a corresponding form, namely, that all sinful creatures for whom God has provided a Saviour, are bound to regulate all their actions, not according to their own pleasure, but according to the will of that Saviour.

3. God the Father, the supreme ruler of the universe, requires of every creature that complete obedience which lies, as I have shown alike from the nature of God, and the nature of man, and the relations between them, at the base of all religion; and by consequence, he demands against sinful man, satisfaction to his

immaculate justice, to his broken covenant, and to his violated law. God the Son undertakes to render that satisfaction, and is ordained to the execution of that work. God the Holy Ghost applies to the redeemed, the satisfaction demanded by the Father, and rendered by the Son. The ineffable love of each divine Person in the Godhead to the others, prompts them all to manifest and to illustrate in this manner, the infinite glory of each in this sublime procedure. And thus in a line of thought suggested by the very nature of religion itself, which is the very highest necessity of man, we arrive at the most naked form of exact accordance between the fundamental conception of the Covenant of Redemption as revealed to us by God, and the fundamental nature of our own inner life as attested by our own consciousness. Now let it be considered that the form of spiritual life unto which fallen man is transformed, by all these acts of God and all these changes in us, is precisely that of which in our sins natural reason has no conception, and natural conscience no ability ; and then the divine reality of it all seems to reach absolute certainty.

II.—1. It is not the righteous—it is sinners whom the Saviour calls to repentance ; it is the sick, not they that be whole, who need a physician.[1] As long as we do not realize our sinfulness, neither can we realize our need of divine grace ; and as soon as we deny the misery which sin brings upon us, we renounce the necessity of divine mercy. It is, no doubt, common for men to fall temporarily into such a condition as this ; and ofttimes the conscience becomes so far seared and blinded, that this condition becomes permanent. The ordinary condition of impenitent men is, perhaps, one of ignorance, indifference, and inattention to divine things, and to their own spiritual estate ; and the more so in all Christian lands, where the light of God is sufficiently diffused, to make obvious the folly of such remedies for our fallen state, as man left to himself has been able to suggest. To arouse, to awaken, to engage, to enlighten the human soul, is the first practical necessity in saving it ; and then to quicken, sustain, and sanctify it, is to fit it for the acceptable service, and satisfying enjoyment of God. It is by the love of God the Father, the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the application of both to our souls with divine light and power

[1] Matt., ix. 9–13.

by the Holy Ghost, that all this is accomplished. And in the process, the word and ordinances of God, together with his divine providence, and together with the whole forces abiding in the nature he has given us, are made tributary to the great work of our restoration. Countless millions of human beings have encountered all the conditions embraced in all these statements; countless millions denying and rejecting the remedy made known by God; countless millions accepting it; all of them on both sides, exhibiting some phase or other of the relation of the great truths and principles on which the Covenant of Redemption rests, to the fundamental religious ideas, convictions, and nature of man. Every human being who has been in reach of the word of God, has had the opportunity of knowing what it is God proposes, and the means he has provided for his great end. Every human being who has had the opportunity of seeing the children of God, has had the means of appreciating the effects of God's purposes and acts in restoring fallen man to his lost image. And every human being who has either accepted or rejected the Gospel, has had in his own mental experience the most intimate testimony of the relation between that Gospel and the soul, rejecting or accepting it. The question, therefore, so far from being obscure, is one which nothing but voluntary ignorance, or sinful indifference, could prevent all the countless millions of whom I have spoken, from appreciating justly and determining with certainty. If it be alleged that other millions, perhaps as numerous, never heard of Christ or the covenant of which he was the Mediator; I readily admit as to them, that the position in which the Scriptures place them is such, as to require a modification of the foregoing statements, to the whole extent of remitting them back to the position in which fallen man stood when he was driven from Eden—or to whatever intermediate position they may have attained through God's mercy. They must live, or they must die, according to their actual condition. But the more dreadful this condition may be supposed to be, the clearer is the evidence drawn from human nature itself, that there is no salvation for man except through the Covenant of Redemption; and that it has always been administered, as it has always been revealed, in a way of sovereign grace.

2. Our actual condition, therefore, is capable of the most distinct appreciation; and so the elements of it are capable of the

most exact comparison with that glorious covenant through which we are saved. Depraved, but capable of restoration; perceiving the true and the good—the false and the evil, but all indistinctly and inadequately; dependent and accountable, lying under the clear sense of duty even amidst its perpetual violations, and the strong sense of blameworthiness which even the sense of our moral impotence sharpens instead of alleviating; recalling vaguely, but yet powerfully, the great estate we have lost, and incapable of extinguishing a hope equally vague, yet not less powerful, of a still greater estate to come; such are the outlines of that mysterious inner life, full of anomalies, wonderful in its ceaseless activity, the outworkings of whose consuming unrest even the most calm and thoughtful can neither perfectly regulate nor completely control. The word of God, revealing us to ourselves, points out all the realities, all the mysteries of our being; and as often as we test its statements, we feel more and more how boundless its insight is. Then it explains to us the sources of all these mixed and wondrous things; our creation, our primeval estate, our trial, our fall, the promise of a Saviour, the sentence of God, our mortal probation, and our eternal judgment; and as we listen to its great and solemn utterances, and compare them with that inner life to which they constantly appeal, the darkness vanishes before those testimonies whose entrance giveth light and giveth understanding. And then it takes up its wondrous parable of sovereign grace. What we are, it has already explained. How we came to be as we are, it had also explained. But now, it is deliverance—and the way thereof. The eternal love of God the Father; redemption through the Son of God made flesh; a new, holy, blessed, and immortal life, through the Holy Ghost! And this sublime remedy is addressed, point by point, to every element of the inner and the outward life of man, as the fall left him, and as sin has made him. The question is, the relevancy of the glorious remedy, to the fearful case; the relevancy of the Covenant of Redemption to the fundamental religious ideas, convictions, and nature of man. It seems to me that the universal judgment of all intelligent beings must be, that sinners who cannot be saved in this way, cannot be saved at all. And surely it cannot be doubted that any sinner saved in this way, will not only joyfully testify to the efficacy and the blessedness thereof, but will forever exalt

and magnify that Saviour, whom he has found to be the way, the truth, and the life.

3. The Apostle Paul, in celebrating our deliverance through Jesus Christ our Lord, has recounted to us his own mental struggles, his weakness, and the nature of his victory, in a way level to the comprehension of every child of God, and probably realized in the experience of each one of them.[1] The more we are enlightened to discern the holiness of the law of God, the more clearly do we perceive our present inability to keep it, and at the same time our just condemnation under it. The good that we would, we do not: but the evil which we would not, that we do. Well may we, with that great Apostle, cry out, on the one hand, Oh! wretched man that I am; and, on the other hand, Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! What can we do, of ourselves, to commend ourselves to God, as fallen sinners? We cannot change our natures, even if we desired it, any more than an Ethiopian can change his skin, or a leopard his spots: and even if we could change it, if we desired to do so, we are absolutely incapable of forming such a desire, in our own strength. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.[2] And, moreover, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.[3] However powerful our religious impulses may be, it is absolutely certain that, if left to ourselves, they can never conduct us to the true and living God. Impotent alike to render account of our past transgressions, or to atone for them; it would be of little avail, even if we were competent to do both, so long as our depraved nature, which we cannot change, remains a perennial source of all iniquity, and its pollution a complete disqualification while it lasts, for the service and the enjoyment of God. It is true, indeed, that the pungent knowledge of all this is derived, not from nature, or reason, but from God. But it is also true that the soul accepts this divine exposition of the significance of its whole condition, as soon as the Holy Ghost has quickened it to know God and itself. That great Apostle already referred to, has developed, in his own experience, how it is that one who is a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, may be at the same time

[1] Rom., vii. 7–25. [2] Rom., viii. 7. [3] 1 Cor., ii. 14.

zealous towards God, even after a manner revealed from Heaven. Nor can the carnal heart understand how the chief of sinners could be aided in his transformation into the most enlightened and heroic of all believers, by a voice saying to him, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.[1] It is here precisely, we perceive so clearly that the world by wisdom cannot know God; and that this is a result neither casual nor variable, but one in which the wisdom of God himself is involved.[2] Here it is we realize, that unto them which are called, Christ crucified is the power of God and the wisdom of God; and that he is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption![3] Every thing in us exacts precisely what God has done for us; and as soon as he has accomplished it, every thing in us exults in the completeness and the fitness of it all.

4. I have already pointed out the obligation resting on us, considered merely as creatures of God, to regulate our conduct by his will; and the corresponding obligation resting on us as offenders against God, to regulate our conduct by the will of the Saviour he has provided for us. In both cases obedience is the conception which is responsive to our estate—obedience of the creature to his Creator—obedience of the sinner to his Saviour. Under the Covenant of Works, the obedience of the creature must of necessity be complete, and be rendered by the creature. Under the Covenant of Grace, an imperfect obedience of the sinner may be accepted by God, for the sake of the perfect obedience rendered by his divine Saviour. To suppose that God can save us in our sins is both absurd and impious. On the other hand, we have lost by the fall not only the ability to render a complete personal obedience unto eternal life—but even the opportunity of making such an attempt, since the Covenant of Works as a covenant of life no longer exists. That we are naturally neither able nor inclined to render that new obedience which God, through his grace, accepts from penitent and believing sinners, for the sake of Christ, is felt to be certain by every human heart; and is, moreover, manifest in that naturally we are not penitent, and do not believe in the Saviour. Here, then, by our own impenitence and unbelief, we are cut off from Christ, and from the obedience of faith; and if the matter is left there, we perish under the Covenant of Grace

[1] Acts, xxii. 1–16; 1 Tim., i. 12–17. [2] 1 Cor., i. 21.
[3] 1 Cor., i. 23, 24, 30.

itself. What occurs is, that God imputes to us the righteousness of Christ which is the fruit of his obedience—that we receive this righteousness through faith—that the faith whereby we receive it is a grace of the Holy Ghost resulting from the renewal of the soul by him—that our new obedience, whether outward or inward, is the product of the acts and works of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—and that salvation is real, and wholly gratuitous. We are united to our Saviour, both to suffer with him and to reign with him: this has resulted from the work of the Holy Ghost in us: that resulted from the act of the Father imputing to us the righteousness of Christ: those acts and works were all immediately the fruits of the Covenant of Grace—and remotely of the eternal counsel, purpose, and decree of God. Now here is the Covenant of Redemption, and the process of our actual salvation—face to face. It seems to me that their relation to each other is precise and complete. For so much as relates to that covenant, God is the witness: for so much as relates to our own souls, the testimony of our own consciousness is added to the declarations of God.

5. I have said repeatedly that the absolute dominion of God over man, and the absolute dependence of man on God, are the fundamental truths that control all the relations between God and man. Every conception we have of God's existence, nature, or works, every idea we can form of creation, providence, or grace—all terminate in the absolute dominion of God. On the other hand, every conception we have of our condition as creatures of God, no matter of what degree, or in what estate, results in our absolute dependence on him. And every conceivable relation between God and man, no matter how high man may rise, or how low he may sink, and no matter by what means in either case; necessarily involves this dominion on the one side, and this dependence on the other. There is no escape from this, but by some means that will annihilate either God or ourselves; as, for example, by atheism which annihilates God; or by pantheism which annihilates every thing but that which they call God. And what is gained by either result? Absolutely nothing. For our dependence on something—whether chance, or fate, or fortune, is just as real as it was before; and the dominion of something—whether chance, or fate, or fortune, over us, is just as absolute as it was before. Whatever else we have gotten rid

of, we have not gotten rid of our absolute dependence, or of an absolute dominion over us. Why then should it be thought strange, that this infinite sovereignty of God should attach to his grace? Or rather, of all things, is not his unmerited favour that in regard of which his sovereign disposal should be most absolute? And why should it be thought strange, that our universal dependence should embrace dependence in the matter of salvation? Or rather, of all things, is not saving grace that for which sinful creatures must be most dependent on an offended God? If we suppose that this sovereignty attaches to divine grace, only in the original conception of it, then it is grace which can be of no avail to us; for unless we be redeemed by the divine Saviour, we must perish. And if we suppose the sovereignty of divine grace may go that far and stop—then we are lost; for unless we are renewed by the divine Spirit, we must perish. And every supposition we can make, which comes short of bearing forward the sovereign grace of God, divinely and efficaciously to our personal salvation, leaves us as sinners in a condition of certain destruction. In truth, the only effect of abrogating the divine sovereignty touching the whole range of God's saving grace, is to render it absolutely certain that no sinner will be saved. And all our attempts to lower and weaken our complete dependence on God, in our whole salvation, so far from being of any avail to the impenitent, tend only against the hopes of the children of God. Our nature and our condition are such, that grace *may* save us; and if the sovereignty of God be brought to bear with divine efficacy upon our souls, it *will* save us. But if we be left to ourselves—released in any degree from our dependence on God and his dominion over us, in the matter of grace and salvation—we are lost; and they for whose supposed benefit, the elect of God are robbed of their covenanted interest in eternal life, are also lost. Eternal life, as St. Paul has expressly stated, is simply the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.[1]

6. If we will exclude from our conception of salvation for sinners, the distinct scriptural idea of redemption, I suppose it is impossible to realize in thought, even with the Scriptures to instruct us, how it is possible for sinners to be saved. But as soon as we admit that scriptural idea of redemption, all that I have hitherto asserted becomes inevitable, and is all taught in the

[1] Rom., vi. 23.

Scriptures in direct connection with redemption. We cannot understand how, under the dominion of God, transgression can be passed over, without atonement ; nor is it possible to interpret one out of many thousand declarations of his word, so as to make out any thing else but that the wages of sin is death. The claims of divine justice cannot be set aside ; the demands of God's violated law cannot be resisted ; the penalty of his broken covenant cannot be disregarded ; the infinite majesty of God cannot be defied, and his infinite dominion assailed, and his infinite goodness outraged, without retribution. On the other hand, we ourselves have no certitude deeper, than the reality of our own blameworthiness in the sight of God ; we perceive nothing more clearly, than the necessity of retribution ; we can conceive of no impossibility greater, than that God should either approve our sins, or deny their existence. Utterly insuperable as this barrier is—there remains something more. For these terrible offences are the fruit of a polluted nature, which is no more fit for God's reconciled presence, than the sinful fruits of it are fit for his approbation. It is only through the unsearchable riches of his love that God proposes to save such sinners ; and redemption through the blood of Christ is the method by which divine wisdom and divine power, prompted by divine goodness, accomplish the proposals of divine love. The Lord Jesus, addressing himself directly to the Father, said that the power over all flesh which he had received from him, was to the end that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given to him. These are they, he added, which thou gavest me out of the world ; thine they were, and thou gavest them me. I pray for them ; I pray not for the world, but for them thou hast given me.[1] And to this purport is the whole of the wonderful passage, a few words of which I have quoted. It is for those whom God has given to him, that Christ has given himself to be a ransom, to be wisdom, to be righteousness, to be sanctification, to be redemption.[2] And so Christ Jesus having obtained eternal redemption, by his own blood, has passed into the heavens ; and that blood of his who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God, purges our conscience from dead works, to serve the living God.[3] Well may we believe the emphatic dec-

[1] John, xvii. 2, 3, 6, 9.

[2] 1 Tim., ii. 6 ; 1 Cor., i. 30 ; Gal., iv. 4, 5.

[3] Heb., ix. 12–15 ; Dan., ix. 24, 25.

laration of Christ, All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me ; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. Well may we confide in his assurance, that it is the Father's will, that of all he has given to the Son, he should lose nothing, but should raise it up again, at the last day.[1]

7. It is not a little remarkable that the natural heart easily contents itself with any general statements of God concerning his divine grace ; but is prompt to take offence as soon as those statements assume a specific and determinate shape. And yet it is extremely obvious, that if, after all, it was left wholly and absolutely to us, whether we would choose to be saved or not,—admitting that in such a case any natural heart ever would choose to be saved, in the manner pointed out in the Gospel ; the final and decisive matter, in every case, would be an act of the human soul, and that in its unregenerate state—and not a work of the Spirit of God. And it makes no difference how this act of the soul is explained, so long as it is the final and decisive thing, whereby we live or whereby we perish ; for salvation is made to depend, at last, on some action of our depraved soul, and not on the power of God. No doubt the soul must consent, and does consent ; it believes and repents and it is saved. But it is the soul renewed by the Holy Ghost, which thus consents, believes, and repents ; these acts of the soul are all manifestations of its new life, not methods of obtaining that life. We are not chosen of God because we have chosen Christ, but we have chosen Christ because we were chosen of God. And in point of fact, however we may bewilder ourselves, this is the actual experience of the human soul. Not as distinct always as in the case of Abraham, or the case of Saul of Tarsus ; but real and inevitable in the case of every renewed soul ; and Christ may as truly say to every one of them, as he said to his Apostles, ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.[2]

III.—1. When we attempt to pass into the bosom of God, and to seek for the most remote reasons of our personal salvation—and the most remote reasons for the failure of personal salvation to be universal ; it becomes us to speak with the greatest reserve and modesty. It is perfectly certain that no reason known to any child of God, exists in him, upon which he could ground any explanation of God's eternal love for him. Perhaps we may

[1] John, vi. 37–39. [2] John, xv. 16.

venture so far as to assert, that in our present state of being, no one could understand clearly, even if it were revealed to him, what the exact nature of that remotest reason was. And yet we dare not say that God, who is the fountain of all intelligence, can act without a sufficient reason ; nor can we venture to assert, that when we come to see light in the very light of God, as the Psalmist has expressed it,[1] we shall not comprehend innumerable mysteries of God, of the very existence of the most of which we may now have no suspicion. We cannot, without denying the faith, hesitate to assert that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.[2] Nor are we permitted to doubt that this free and special love of God is the ground of our being made heirs of God, according to the hope of eternal life ; for which we are fitted by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost ; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.[3] In that free and eternal love of God, we have found the most remote reason of our personal salvation which is comprehensible to us, or revealed by God. And surely no object of it could conceive of any thing so ennobling, as a motive to whatever is good or great ; any thing so assured as a foundation on which to rest ; any thing so affecting as an incentive to unqualified self-consecration ; any thing so overwhelming as a power within the soul, so irresistible as a force impelling the soul ! And the rapture of our brother Paul should find a response in all Christian hearts, in behalf of every one of which he has exclaimed, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.[4]

2. The other aspect of a mystery so fearful in itself, and so obscure to us in its earliest stages, demands of us still more self-distrust in pursuing its remotest reason. It is clear to us that sinners perish for their sins. But this, under a dispensation of divine grace, is scarcely a sufficient explanation ; because it is the glory of Christ that he is able to save to the uttermost, all who come to God by him ; and indeed, he not only does save

[1] Ps. xxxvi. 9.
[2] John, iii. 16.
[3] Titus, iii. 4–7 ; Eph., ii. 4–10.
[4] Rom., viii. 38, 39.

many of the chief of sinners, but his salvation is exclusively for sinners. Going back a step farther, it is clear to us that the rejection of Christ, is the cause of our perdition; but we must bear in mind that all to whom he was ever offered, have rejected him—none more distinctly than many of the chief of saints—and that all would persist in doing so forever, but for the grace of the Holy Ghost. Still going back, we easily understand that it is by grieving and resisting the Holy Ghost, we remain obstinately in our alienation from Christ, and so perish; but it must not be concealed that every child of God would have done the same thing, with the same result, if it had not been for the special, efficacious, and preventing grace of the Holy Ghost, enabling him, and inclining him, and fitting him to accept Christ. In another step backward, we encounter the source of all evil in all men, in their original depravity; and at the next step we encounter the cause of this natural pollution, in the fall of man; but, as to both of these terrible realities, there is absolutely nothing which can distinguish the case of one human being from another; for all are by nature equally the children of wrath, and the first man, Adam, was equally the progenitor and the representative—the root, of all. We have, therefore, traced the mystery to a point antecedent to the entrance of sin into the universe, and have found the remotest reason of the perdition of ungodly men still eluding us—still passing back as we carefully follow it. At last we must pass into eternity, and put in a negative form, what before we put in a positive form. We do not know, neither could we comprehend if it were explained to us, why the special and free love of God, did not select for its eternal objects the particular sinners which it did not select, any more than why it selected the particular sinners it did select. And yet we dare not say there was no reason for it; that it was a mere caprice. What we know is, that both facts are asserted in the most distinct manner by God, in his holy word;[1] that the existence of the Covenant of Redemption involves them both; that the personal history of every human being establishes one or the other of them; and that the aggregate career of the whole race of mankind is inexplicable, unless both of them be true. Being true—every thing is explained—which we are capable of understanding; but in a manner wonderful and overpowering.

[1] Rom., ix. 22, 23; Eph., i. 5, 6; Prov., xvi. 4; Matt., xxv. 34, 41.

3. The whole case terminates at last in the same sublime result, whether we pursue it simply upon the word of God, or whether we illustrate the systematic theory of salvation by the course of divine providence practically developing it, or by the inner life of the individual soul personally exhibiting it. We cannot conceive that either creation, or providence, or grace, could exist without an end worthy of God, or in a manner contrary to any of his infinite perfections. The illustration of his infinite being to an intelligent universe, and thereby his own declarative glory, and the highest blessedness of the universe compatible with the chief end of its own existence ; is the highest end which we can conceive, and is the end declared by God, as the reason of creation, providence, and grace. Redemption belongs to that part of the case which we call grace ; and must incur the force of the end and reason of the whole case—and does so in the most explicit manner. Upon whatever ground sin exists in the universe, it is a ground which the infinite wisdom of God, and the infinite holiness of God respect ; and upon whatever ground misery exists, it is a ground which the infinite goodness and mercy of God respect. Addressing the resources of his infinite being, for the ends and upon the reasons already suggested, to the treatment of the tremendous questions of sin and misery, in such a universe ; most assuredly it ought not to surprise us, that one result should be the illustration, forever, of his immaculate justice, that another result should be the illustration, forever, of his infinite beneficence—and that both results should so occur as to display his nature and perfections in the clearest manner. Still less should it surprise us, that in such a case God should reveal to us these sublime procedures with the ends and effects of them ; that thus revealed, they should be found to accord with our own nature and condition, a nature created and then renewed in the image of God, and a condition to which these very procedures of God have relation ; or that, clear as all might be in its immediate personal application to us, it should all be overpowering, and much of it inscrutable, in its most remote analysis, and in its immeasurable compass. This appears to be precisely what has occurred. We shall comprehend it all the better, in a higher state of existence. In our present estate what we need is, a sufficient insight to comprehend in what manner, and upon what principles, it may all

avail to deliver us from the wrath to come. And the more clearly we can see that we are exposed to that wrath, the more urgently does it become us to address ourselves to the remedy afforded by the blood of Christ. Nay, that very sense of our sinfulness is at once a proof that we are like those Christ came to save, and a help to us in discerning him as the way, the truth, and the life. It is a true saying, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; and the assured way of being saved is to call on his adorable name.[1]

4. We are told that God has chosen us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.[2] And in immediate connection with this statement, the separate and the concurring action of each person in the Godhead, for us and in us, as well as the blessings and benefits which flow to us, and the glory which redounds to God, are distinctly set forth.[3] It was the will of God that the Son should undertake our salvation; and he did it with delight.[4] As a part of his reward, he asked and received as his own, those whom he would redeem by his own most precious blood.[5] And it was his unalterable love to the Father, and to the redeemed, which led him to undertake and perform all his work as Mediator between God and men.[6] It is, in divine love, through divine goodness, and with a divine satisfaction, that through the counsel, the purpose, and the will of God, we are chosen by him before the foundation of the world, in Christ Jesus, in whose blood we have redemption, and in whom we are sealed with the Holy Spirit, unto the praise of the glory of God.[7] This, let us remember, is not stated as the conclusion of our poor reason, but is the detailed account given by inspiration to the saints themselves, through the greatest human expositor of the mind of God: and therewith all the Scriptures concur.[8] And therewith also the unalterable faith of the church of God agrees, and the spiritual life and experience of the children of God accord. The work of God confirms the word of God.

[1] 1 Tim., i. 15; Rom., x. 13. [2] Eph., i. 4. [3] Eph., i., *passim*.
[4] Ps. xl. 6–10. [5] Ps. ii. 6–9; Isa., liii. 10–12.
[6] John, xiii. 1; xvii. 4–6. [7] Eph., i. 1–13.
[8] John, iii. 15–17; Rom., v. 8; 1 Thess., iv. 8; 1 Pet., i. 2; 2 Thess., ii. 13.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SPECIAL OBLIGATIONS LAID ON MAN, AS SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION.

I. 1. Ultimate Truths concerning Human Nature.—2. Influence of these Truths upon the Divine Means of Human Restoration.—3. The Universal Relation of Obedience to God and Life in God: this Relation as exhibited through the Covenant of Redemption.—4. The Universal Need of Special Divine Assistance, in order to Obedience and Life.—II. 1. Special Conditions of the Covenant of Redemption considered as a Covenant between God and Elect Sinners.—2. The Grounds of Separation between Men and God, and the Means of their Removal —with the Relations of all to the Conditions of this Covenant.—3. Faith and Repentance, the Conditions of Salvation for Sinners.—III. 1. The double Office of both these Graces of the Spirit: their special Nature as considered here.—2. Analogy between the two Sacraments which signify and seal, and the two Conditions on which we receive, all the Benefits of this Covenant.—3. Saving Faith summarily explained.—4. Repentance unto Life summarily explained.—5. Repentance toward God considered as a Duty, in the neglect of which Salvation is impossible for Sinners.—6. Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, considered in the same respect.—7. Analogy of the two Covenants, with respect to the obligatory Force of their special Conditions.—IV. 1. Nature of the Impotence produced by Sin: and of Obedience performed in Sin.—2. No conceivable Change in God or Ourselves, can make Salvation for Sinners possible, in any other way.—3. It is effectual in this way, only upon the Allowance of Divine Assistance.—4. The overwhelming practical Illustration furnished by all Sinners, whether Believing or Unbelieving, Penitent or Impenitent.—5. The Means proposed by God, and their Result.

I.—1. THERE are elements in human nature, ultimate truths of our being, original data of consciousness, which neither the teacher of theology nor the preacher of the Gospel, can lose sight of for a moment, without giving up, at the same time, the very foundation of every appeal to man. The sense of duty, which touches on one side our sense of the true, and on the other our sense of the good: the sense of responsibility, commensurate exactly with the sense of duty, testifying continually both to our moral nature, and to the moral government which is, and which must forever be, over us: the sense of blameworthiness on account of duty neglected and condemnation justly incurred, which

is the testimony of our conscience to our guilt: the sense of satisfaction on account of duty discharged and approval justly awarded, which is the testimony of our conscience to our rectitude: these are indestructible conditions of our moral constitution, which must exist, so far as we can understand, while our nature exists, under every possible form of the divine administration over us. Any fundamental change in them applied to our whole race, would immediately change the relations of the whole race to Adam, to Christ, and to God, as well as the relations of the individuals of the race to each other; and any such change applied to any individual of the race, would immediately break in two the chain of his own continued conscious existence, and destroy his personal identity.

2. Whatever, therefore, may be the nature of the Covenant of Redemption, considered as a covenant in eternity between the Persons of the Godhead, having any applicability to man; in all the obligations it may lay on him, and all the conditions of it which may have special relation to him—these fundamental peculiarities of his moral constitution will be made full account of by him who is the author alike of human nature, and of the infinitely gracious covenant by which that nature is to be restored and exalted. In like manner, only still more clearly, when in that eternal covenant, Christ is considered as the head of all believers, or it is considered as being manifested in time as a covenant between God and the soul of the believer; this moral constitution of man, deduced not only from his own intimate consciousness, but also from the statements of God concerning it in his blessed word, must, in a manner, be decisive in its influence on the infinite remedy, so far as it is to be applied to his own inner life. It is hardly worth while to discuss questions which seem to be so obvious. I, therefore, content myself with repeating, that in every act and work of God, he respects, in the most exact manner, every other act and work of his; every departure from this method being indeed strictly miraculous. And as to his covenant dealings with man, the fundamental principle on which they all proceed, is the special bestowment of new and higher mercies: and the specific difference between God's Covenants with man, considered as of Works and of Grace, lies in the transcendent mercy of the way in which grace is bestowed, as well as in the transcendent grace itself. It is under the light of

truths such as these, that whatever conditions and obligations are annexed to the Covenant of Redemption, are to be contemplated ; as on the one hand they are exalted in their relation to the glory and love of God, and on the other magnified in their relation to the sinner they would save and advance. The idea of their being obstructions which the sinner must overcome, difficulties thrown across the entrance of the way of life, is wholly inconsistent with the nature and objects of Redemption, and wholly subversive of our hope of deliverance thereby.

3. It has been abundantly shown, that if God had not made the Covenant of Works with man, every duty obligatory on man in his primeval estate, would have been a condition of life : and that any breach of any obligation imposed on him by that estate sufficiently grave to require redress, would have necessarily forfeited the favour of God. Everywhere under the dominion of God, obedience and life go together. The universal obedience of all, in all things, under our primeval estate ; the restricted and covenanted obedience of Adam, under the Covenant of Works ; the universal and covenanted obedience of Christ, under the Covenant of Grace ; and the new obedience of the elect under the same covenant. Everywhere it is obedience and life. Do and live: do that others may live: do that sinners may live, and living may do in Christ. These are the successive forms in which the universal conception of obedience and life is developed in the word of God, and the spiritual progress of man. The duty of universal obedience unto life in man's first estate, or that of special obedience unto life under the Covenant of Works, could be no clearer, no more binding, no more indispensable to the reward, nor its breach any more attended by loss of the favour of God : than the duty of the new obedience under the Covenant of Redemption, and the loss of the favour of the Saviour without it. There is this grand difference, that Adam fell, and that Christ triumphed; so that in Adam it is the consequences of the breach of duty that we encounter ; while in Christ it is the consequences of all righteousness fulfilled that we encounter. But this instead of making more obscure makes more clear, the obligation of our new obedience in order to the favour of the Saviour, and the recovered favour of God, and therewith our recovered and better life through him. And so with relation to that new obedience, and in order to our fitness for it, are those special condi-

tions and obligations of the Covenant of Redemption, through which our ability to that new obedience is either obtained or manifested. And this is but another way of saying, those special conditions and obligations are with relation to our union with Christ, and our restoration through him to God; and are in order to enjoy and manifest that union and that restoration. And if no such special obligations and conditions were annexed by God to the Covenant of Redemption; what would occur would be, that every duty and every obligation of man under that covenant, would become a condition of life to us, under it. That is, in effect, the Covenant of Grace would be most signally changed to our total undoing. For now, by means of these special conditions and obligations, we are so united to Christ, that our imperfect obedience is accepted on account of his perfect obedience: whereas, but for them, our new obedience would have to be perfect in all things, in order to be accepted.

4. Nor does it alter the case at all, under either covenant, that man, on account of his fallibility under one, and his depravity under the other; stood in constant need of divine help, in order to perform the special duties imposed on him, as conditions of obtaining the blessings held forth in either covenant. For he needed the divine aid, under both covenants, to enable him to discharge every duty possible under each of them, as really as he needed it to perform the special duties designated as special conditions of them, and special tests of his condition before God. His dependence on God is absolute, both as a creature merely, and as a sinful creature. His moral constitution, once fallible only, is now fallen: but it is otherwise the same moral constitution. Life and immortality, now brought to light in a new, perfect, and glorious form by the Gospel for sinful men, were offered to be confirmed and augmented to man in his estate of innocence. The grand difference is, that under the first covenant, special divine aid was not promised and was not given, and therefore fallible man did not discharge the special condition of that covenant—but fell: while under the second covenant special divine aid was promised and is given, and therefore fallen man does discharge the especial conditions of that covenant—and is restored. And the whole ground of this difference is, that the first covenant was one of Works, while the second covenant is one of Grace and Redemption. I have explained

at large, in another place, the merciful nature of the special condition of the first covenant. It is still more obvious, that the special conditions of the second covenant, namely, Repentance toward God, and Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, are manifestations of divine mercy so special and so distinct, that without them the perdition of all sinners is as inevitable, after the publication of the Covenant of Grace, as before. It is by dealing simply and thoroughly with the great truths of God, and keeping before our minds and hearts the sublime proportion of faith, that we escape many errors, and solve many difficulties, and receive light and comfort as we walk humbly before God.

II.—1. The Covenant of Redemption as a covenant in eternity, between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, absolutely considered; as a covenant also, in which all the redeemed were represented by the Son of God, their covenant head; and finally, as a covenant between God and the soul of every believer, manifested in time; has been already very carefully set forth. And then the perfect accordance of that covenant, in whatever light, with our own intimate spiritual life, nature, and convictions, has been exhibited at length. Considered more especially as a covenant between God and the soul of the believer, and as a covenant in which our divine Redeemer represented all the elect of God; the special conditions and obligations of it, concerning which we now particularly enquire, assume their most distinct form. And as we make application of these aspects of it, in the light of the great truths I have just been attempting to set forth, we shall see how completely it is the foundation of our hope, and how thoroughly it provides for our salvation.

2. The Scriptures plainly teach, as I have repeatedly pointed out, that there are two grounds of separation between God and our souls, and two things required in us in order that we may be restored to the favour of God. Our actual transgressions, in thought, word, and deed, terrible as they are, must be disposed of in such a manner as will satisfy divine justice: and while they remain as they are, they present an insuperable barrier between God and the sinner. Our polluted natures, the source of all actual sins, must be purified; for while they remain as they are, they render us utterly unfit for the service and enjoyment of God. Here are the two terms between every sinner and God: the two necessities preliminary to any possible

restoration of any sinner to God. Now how it is that Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace, removes directly, by his own satisfaction for us, all such barriers and difficulties as lie in our actual offences; and how by the purchase and gift of the Holy Ghost, he indirectly removes all such as lie in our polluted nature; I have largely explained in a former Treatise. And how, in the practical application to us by the Holy Ghost, of the benefits of Christ's whole work as Mediator, we are led on from one degree of grace and strength to another, through the whole Christian experience and the new life, to endless glory and blessedness; will be set forth in order, in this Treatise. The point immediately before us is, those conditions of the Covenant of Redemption, directly responsive to our actual and our original sin, our practical and our inward pollution; those special obligations upon us, immediately responsive to pardon and purification; those special duties under the Covenant of Grace, which respond to the special duty laid on Adam under the Covenant of Works; those special graces immediately connected with our new life in Christ, which are analogous to the special aid which would have been given to man, if Adam had obtained the promised reward, and his seed had obtained it in him. I have already said, they are Faith and Repentance.

3. The Apostle Paul, in his solemn and final appeal to the Elders of the Church at Ephesus, when by his request they met him at Miletus, as he went up bound in the Spirit, to Jerusalem, to encounter bonds and afflictions; plainly told them that he had kept back nothing that was profitable unto them, but that showing and teaching, not only publicly but from house to house, that which he had testified both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, was *Repentance toward God*, and *Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.**[1] And then he solemnly adjured them, that having so taught, he was pure from the blood of all men, because, said he, I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.†[2] Faith and Repentance, therefore,—Repentance toward God and Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ—on the part of man, summarily express the whole counsel of God concerning our salvation. These are the grand obligations resting on man under the Covenant of Redemption. These are the grand conditions of

* Τὴν εἰς τὸν Θεὸν μετάνοιαν, καὶ πίστιν τὴν εἰς τόν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν.
[1] Acts, xx. 21. † Πᾶσαν τὴν βουλήν τοῦ Θεοῦ. [2] Acts, xx. 27.

that covenant, as propounded to us by God. Unless these conditions are performed—unless these obligations are discharged, salvation by that covenant is impossible for man. By that covenant, therefore, they who never were sinners cannot be saved; for, in the scriptural sense, they can exercise neither Faith nor Repentance. It is not the righteous, but sinners, whom Jesus came to save. In like manner, the unbelieving and the impenitent, though they be sinners, cannot be saved. It is the precise and explicit purpose of God, to save penitent and believing sinners; and this is perfectly elemental in the Covenant of Redemption, and in the way of its practical administration. From the commencement of the ministry of John the Baptist, onward through all ages, the cry has continually sounded in the ears of lost men—Repent ye.[1] From the moment that Paul and Silas, in the jail at Philippi, proclaimed for the first time to the race of Japhet, the Gospel of the Grace of God, every soul desiring to know what it must do to be saved, has received for answer, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.[2] And Jesus himself, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and proclaiming that the time was fulfilled and the Kingdom of God at hand, laid the foundation of all his teaching, and of all salvation through him—in the great command, Repent ye and Believe the Gospel![3]

III.—1. Faith and Repentance, it is necessary to observe, occupy a double position, in the matter of our salvation—and perform a twofold office therein. They are in a peculiar sense, not only graces themselves, but means whereby other graces exist or grow; acts, also, of the soul—and moreover means and aids to other acts of the soul, and therefore, in both respects duties. Being graces of the Holy Spirit, they can be nothing else than exercises of the renewed soul; manifestations of the new life begotten in us by him, even the life of the second Adam, who was a quickening spirit and the Lord from Heaven,—of which all the Redeemed are made partakers. And in this respect they partake of the nature of every christian grace. But besides this, as we derive every thing through Christ, and Faith in a peculiar manner unites us to him, and has a peculiar relation to him; it becomes the means by which all that Christ bestows on us is received. In like manner, as we receive pardon of sin from

[1] Matt., iii. 2. [2] Acts, xvi 31. [3] Mark, i. 15.

God, together with all that is immediately involved therein, and Repentance has a peculiar relevancy to him on one side, and to our sins on the other ; it becomes one means of all our growth in grace and in conformity to God. These functions of Faith and Repentance are manifestly different from those which they both perform when we consider them as the special conditions of our being Christians at all. In the former aspect, they will both be considered carefully, in another connection ; it is in the latter aspect we are considering them now.

2. There is a wonderful analogy in all these mysteries of grace. In the two Sacraments of the Christian Church—Baptism and the Lord's Supper—we have represented, by the former, our cleansing through the work of the Holy Ghost, and by the latter, our pardon and acceptance through the sacrifice of Christ. And this pardon and purification, as I have before shown, are all that is necessary to our salvation. In like manner, in the two great offices of the Covenant of Redemption—namely, Faith and Repentance—we have set before us, in the former, the only means of union with Christ, whereby alone can we obtain any grace at all—and whereby we can obtain all grace ; and in the latter the only means of our deliverance from sin, either outward or inward, either original or actual. Nothing can be more certain, as I have repeatedly shown, than that every benefit we derive from Christ is made to depend, in some way, on our Faith in him ; while all pardon of sin is directly connected with Repentance, and all increase in holiness is beyond our power, except as we see and hate sin on one side, and see and strive after holiness on the other. And thus we have multiplied corroborations of the mystery of Godliness. The twofold barriers to God, in our offences and our pollution, removed in our pardon and purification, through the work of Christ, and the work of the Spirit ; and all this set forth alike, in the sacraments of the Covenant of Redemption, whereby its benefits are signified and sealed to believers ; and in the conditions of that covenant as they are held forth to penitent and believing sinners, and as they are actually imparted to us, in proportion as these great conditions are fulfilled in us—these great obligations discharged by us. An infinite order and fulness, as well as a divine simplicity and power, pervade the whole counsel of God for our recovery. And though the carnal mind cherishes only enmity to the things

of the Spirit, and though flesh and blood cannot inherit them ; yet the renewed soul that is docile and earnest, will find ceaseless comfort and strength, as it advances in the nearness and the distinctness of its vision of them.

3. Passing by all scholastic distinctions, the faith of which I speak continually, is Saving Faith : the act of those who believe to the saving of the soul.[1] The object of it is the Lord Jesus Christ.[2] The rule of it is the word of God.[3] The author of it is the Holy Ghost.[4] It is in the soul of man, a living power,[5] which works by love,[6] which purifies the heart,[7] and overcomes the world.[8] And the aim and end of it is the salvation of the soul.[9] Now what is intended to be asserted is, that it is a fundamental condition of the Covenant of Redemption, that the soul of fallen man in order to partake of its benefits, must first of all incur the benefit of exercising this Faith in Jesus Christ: and that, under the dispensation of divine grace in Jesus Christ, it is the duty of all men to possess and exercise this habit of the soul.

4. In like manner, passing by all scholastic distinctions, the repentance of which I speak continually, is Repentance unto Life : the act of those who turn unto God, sorrowing for their sin.[10] The object of it, is God himself, whose mercy in Christ Jesus, the penitent apprehends.[11] The author of it, is the Holy Spirit.[12] The rule of it is the word of God, in all that it has commanded and all that it has forbidden.[13] The subject-matter of it is, on the one side, ourselves as sinners, and all our sins, from which we turn with holy hatred ; and on the other, every good thing, and God in Christ as the chief good, to whom we turn with set purpose of heart after a new obedience.[14] The fruits of it, are all good works.[15] And the end and aim of it, are pardon, acceptance with God, and eternal life.[16] Now what is asserted is, in this as in the preceding case, that it is a fundamental condition of the Covenant of Redemption, that the soul of fallen man in order to partake of its benefits, must first incur this benefit, of exercising Repentance toward God, along with Faith in Jesus Christ : and that under a dispensation of divine

[1] Heb., x. 39. [2] Acts, xx. 21. [3] Rom., x. 14, 17.
[4] Eph., i. 17–19. [5] Gal., ii. 20. [6] Gal., v. 6.
[7] Acts, xv. 9. [8] 1 John, v. 4. [9] 1 Pet., i. 9.
[10] Acts, xi. 18; xx. 21. [11] Ps. cxxx. 3–7. [12] Zec., xii. 10.
[13] 2 Cor., vii. 9–11; Deut., xxix. 29. [14] Ps. li. 5, 6; Acts, xxvi. 18.
[15] Matt., iii. 8. [16] Mark, i. 4; Luke, xiii. 3–5; Acts, xi. 18.

grace in Jesus Christ, it is the duty of all men to possess this penitent, as well as the preceding believing habit of the soul.

5. It is, as I have already said, in the sense of the second of the two statements annexed to both of the two immediately preceding paragraphs, that Faith and Repentance are to be specially contemplated at this point. It is a duty which we owe alike to God and to our own souls, to repent of our sins and to forsake them: a duty perfectly clear in itself, on the ground of its own evidences, and which cannot be denied without denying the being of God, or denying the moral nature of man. It is a duty, the neglect of which renders salvation simply impossible, if by salvation we mean any thing different from depravity. On the other hand, the duty of honouring and obeying God, of seeking his favour, and regulating our conduct according to his will, is also perfectly clear upon the ground of its own evidences. And while it is neglected, salvation, if it means any thing different from alienation from God and unfitness for his service, is inconceivable. It is apparent, therefore, that if the Covenant of Redemption had failed to make Repentance toward God an absolute condition of salvation for sinners, that omission would have been inconsistent with the nature of God, of man, of sin, and of salvation, as far as we are capable of understanding. Except ye repent, said Jesus, ye shall all likewise perish.[1]

6. That it is the duty of all men under a dispensation of divine grace, to believe in the Saviour provided by God for their deliverance from sin and misery; is also, of itself and upon the ground of its own evidences, perfectly clear. In this case, the obligation resting on sinful creatures to regulate their conduct by the will of the Saviour; is precisely of the same nature as the obligation resting on man considered merely as the dependent creature of God, to regulate his conduct by the will of his Creator. But it is sufficiently plain that it is impossible for sinners to regulate their conduct by the will of a Saviour, while they neither obey him, trust him, nor believe in him: that is, it is self-evidently plain, that the first duty of a sinner is to believe unto salvation in the Saviour whom God has provided. Just as the duty of Repentance toward God, results directly from the two facts that there is a God and that man has sinned: so the duty of Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, results directly from the

[1] Luke, xiii. 3, 5.

two facts that man is a sinner and that Christ is the Saviour of sinners. And to have omitted to make this first duty of the sinner, a fundamental condition of the Covenant of Redemption, would, as far as we can understand, have utterly subverted the spiritual system of the universe disclosed to us in nature and in providence, revealed to us in the word of God, and confirmed by our inner life. And so the Lord Jesus has said, if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.[1]

7. If we will admit, or if it can be proved, that the scriptural account of the creation and fall of man and of the offer of salvation through the blood of Christ, is true ; then the condition of man as a sinner, under the requirements of the Gospel, and the condition of man as no sinner under the requirements of the Law, is, as to the obligatory force of those conditions, respectively, that is, as to the nature of duty, essentially the same condition. The Gospel is as perfectly suited to the condition of fallen man, as the Law could be to the condition of unfallen man. The whole question is, in the *first* place, whether man owes any obligation to God ; and, *secondly*, whether, admitting that he does, it can be a conceivable end or way of salvation to release that obligation. St. Paul has told us plainly that if Faith released the obligation of man to God, this would be a fatal objection ; but that, on the contrary, Faith establishes that obligation.[2] It is no part of salvation to show favour to sin—but to sinners : the very height and object of that salvation, as a mercy to sinners, being involved in their complete deliverance from sin. But it has been shown that the sense of duty in man, though obscured and depraved, cannot be obliterated without destroying his rational and his moral nature—and rendering every conception of salvation absurd as to him. It remains, therefore, that of two possibilities one must occur. We must reject the way of salvation offered in the Scriptures, and remitting ourselves to Natural Religion, accept the only provision it makes for sin—namely, death : or we must accept the duties of Repentance toward God, and Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as unalterable conditions of salvation for sinners through the Covenant of Redemption.

IV.—1. It is made the ground of a cavil that we are not able to perform these conditions and discharge these obligations :

[1] John, viii. 24. [2] Rom., iii. 31.

and, strangely enough, of an opposite cavil, that we are able to do both. The first cavil is in order to deny the binding force of that which exceeds our ability: the second cavil is in order to deny the supernatural aid whereby ability is conferred on us. As to the *first*, if we will reflect that what we mean by our inability, is neither more nor less than our depravity ; then it is tantamount to saying that depravity is in its own nature justifiable ; which is a contradiction in terms. As to the *second*, that which we boast of having accomplished, and that ability in ourselves by which it was achieved—whatever it may be—can be neither more nor less than the natural result of our depraved powers; but if this can be truly called either Repentance toward God or Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, then, obviously, the Covenant of Redemption is wholly insignificant. Both cavils are founded on a general misconception of the nature of sin : to which is added, in the first one, a special misconception of the nature of duty ; and in the second one, a special misconception of the nature of salvation. A sense of the impotence which depravity begets, is inseparable from the sense of depravity itself: a sense of the reality of our Faith and Repentance is inseparable from a sense of self-abnegation and self-condemnation : a sense of deliverance from the wrath of God, is inseparable from the sense of a new illumination and a new life within us.

2. It is impossible to conceive how we could be made partakers of the blessings of salvation, otherwise than as the Scriptures propose, without producing the most prodigious results. For, on the one hand, any serious change in the nature of God, of sin, or of holiness, would make what we now call God, sin, and holiness, perfectly immaterial to us, and us to them. But, on the other hand, any change in us, corresponding to the change just supposed, so as to bring us into sympathy with that new state of things : would separate our existence into two portions having no relation to each other, would destroy our personal identity ; and would convert all God's dealings with us into acts of mere power, regardless of all moral distinctions. So that whatever imaginary difficulties we may create in order to evade the necessity of Faith and Repentance ; the insuperable difficulty is, to save sinners in any other way.

3. These conditions of salvation, then, do not discharge in any degree, the infinite dominion of God over us, or release our

absolute dependence on him ; since the fundamental and unalterable relation we bear to him is that of creatures to their Creator. Nor can the performance of these conditions give us—no matter how we came to perform them—any strict or any meritorious claim upon God for any recompense or any reward ; because to believe what is infinitely true, to regret what is infinitely wrong, to embrace infinite mercy, and to avoid infinite ruin, proves nothing except that he who so acts is not a madman. Nor are these conditions of such a nature, that they either preclude divine assistance, or render it unnecessary, in order to their performance. Man, when fallible, needed divine assistance, to prevent his fall. Man, when fallen, needs divine assistance, in order to his recovery. The creature depends upon his Creator—the sinner depends upon his Saviour—every dependent being needs, and must eternally need, each according to his kind, divine grace to help him in his time of need. But this of which I constantly speak is the Covenant of Grace itself, whereby Redemption is provided and is applied to fallen man. And so close is the connection between the nature and exercises of the human soul, and the scriptural account of the creation, fall, and recovery of man, that the pungent exhibition of the mystery of Godliness, in all the power and fulness thereof—though it be foolishness to them that perish, yet unto them which are saved, it is the power of God.[1]

4. In every part of this great subject the remotest point of our enquiries always presents the most serious difficulty. We come always to the same profound certainty which affects every thing else, that salvation is not absolute and universal ; to the same inscrutable union and separation of the finite and infinite, at the foundation of all ; to the same tendency to opposing results, one human and the other divine, in the last solution. On the other hand, nothing could be more immense and more overwhelming, than the practical demonstration which everywhere exists, to put beyond doubt the final shape of those truths whose remotest forms may so perplex us. Without one single exception, every human soul that embraces Jesus Christ as its Saviour, does so by Faith in his name—and every one that returns to God, does so by Repentance for sin ; and every one openly and joyfully confesses that he has done both, through divine grace—

[1] 1 Cor., i. 18.

and yet that, so far from being put in bondage either in the process or the result, he has done it freely, and has been set free therein. On the other hand, every human soul that has failed or refused to believe in Jesus Christ, is fully sensible that Christ is not his Saviour; and every one that will not repent of sin, is fully sensible that Christ is not the ground of whatever hope he may suppose he has before God; nor is one of them able to suggest any reason why God is not his God, and Christ his Saviour, which would not be completely removed and confuted by Faith and Repentance. But this, in its whole extent, is just the manifestation of what God has said—just the universal illustration of the truths I have been endeavouring to state, to classify, and to enforce. Again I repeat, the whole work of God confirms his word; and our nature in its inmost life, and our reason in its utmost power, and our experience in its whole compass, each delivers its distinct confirmation.

5. On account of the extreme importance of the matter, it may be proper to note in a special manner, how complete the means are which God has provided to lead men to Faith and Repentance. Truth is the very aliment of the soul; and God has made the belief of divine truth, made known by himself, concerning his infinite glory, and his eternal love for us, and concerning our own endless blessedness; the very point in which our souls embrace Jesus Christ, and pass over from death to life. A sense of our blameworthiness is a most complete and pungent manifestation, at once of our moral nature and of its present condition—on the one side God and his nature and dominion, on the other our creaturehood, and our depravity and shame therefor; and in this very point God locates the first movements of our discharge from the bondage of the law of sin and death, and of our freedom through the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.[1] And thus, all the outward means of grace and salvation, by which the knowledge of ourselves and of God is so continually, so urgently, and so completely delivered to our rational and moral faculties; find in the very depths of our nature, the very conditions to which they can most effectually appeal. According to the structure of our nature, and the character of the means used by God, how is it possible to doubt, that the result which ought to follow is, that we believe and repent? But this result does

[1] Rom., viii. 2.

not follow. And the result which does follow, so long as we are left to ourselves, is absolutely incomprehensible, except as we acknowledge that the carnal mind is enmity to God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.[1] Wherefore, there can be no remedy but that proclaimed from heaven, namely, that we put off the old man, which is corrupt ; and be renewed in the spirit of our mind ; and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.[2]

[1] Rom., viii. 7.

[2] Eph., iv. 22–24.

CHAPTER V.

THE ŒCONOMY OF THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION.

I. 1. Transition from the Objective to the Subjective Consideration of the Knowledge of God.—2. General appreciation of the Œconomy of Grace.—3. Method proposed here.—II.—1. The Four Estates of Man, and the Relations of the two Covenants thereto.—2. The absolute Unity of the Way and Method of Salvation, under all Dispensations.—3. Divine Grace, through the Mediator.—4. Perpetual Development thereof.—5. Perpetual Sufficieney thereof.—III.—1. The Essence of the Covenant of Grace.—2. Fundamental points of Agreement between the Covenants of Works, and Grace.—3. Fundamental points of Difference between them.—4. What is involved in this comparison, and what results from it.—IV.—1. Gradual disclosure of the Covenant of Redemption.—2. Universal principle and result of this progress.—3. Unity of the Counsel of God and of the Essence of the Covenant of Grace; variety of Dispensation.—V.—1. Dispensations of the Œconomy of Redemption.—2. Our own posture in this vast administration, perfectly distinct.—3. The Adamic Dispensation.—4. The Noaeic Dispensation.—5. The Old World and the New—Adam and Abraham, connected by Noah.—6. The Abrahamic Dispensation, and Covenant.—7. The Institutions of Moses.—8. Their career and their catastrophe.—9. Christ: the Gospel Church.—10. The future Dispensations of the Covenant of Redemption.—11. The nature and the power of the Knowledge thus attainable.

I.—1. The aim of this first Book of this Treatise of the Knowledge of God Subjectively Considered, is to point out the method by which, in its widest sense, the objective Knowledge of God becomes subjective; the relation between the mere outward knowledge of divine things, and the method and power and effects of that divine knowledge in the soul and upon the life of man. The preceding chapters might perhaps be considered as having sufficiently accomplished that purpose. For the Covenant of Grace and Redemption, which is the expression of the whole purpose and power of God manifested in our salvation, has been carefully considered in its nature, its relations, and its force, up to the point of the effectual, internal application of its benefits unto and within the soul of man: to which we might now proceed. That is, I have endeavoured to exhibit the first utterance by God of the existence and nature of this covenant, and to point out

the influence thereof upon the catastrophe produced by the Fall of Man, and the entrance of sin ; then to state as clearly as I could, the origin, the object, and the great principles and truths of this covenant ; then to disclose the intimate relevancy of it to our own intimate nature, and to our fundamental religious ideas and convictions ; and then to exhibit and to illustrate the unalterable conditions on which its benefits can be applied to fallen men, and the corresponding special obligations resting on them. What would immediately follow would be the exhibition of salvation in the human soul, in the actual present posture of grace on one side, and man on the other.

2. It occurs, however, that the actual present posture both of divine grace and of sinful men, with respect to salvation through the Covenant of Redemption, is related in a manner so intimate, to all that has gone before, and to all that is to follow, touching both the development of grace and the career of man ; that a right understanding of the actual and present, is greatly promoted by a clear perception of the relation of that present to the past even to the beginning, and to the future even to the end. The administration of the Covenant of Redemption has been an immense and continual development of the grace of God in the salvation of fallen men ; and the point at which our race now stands is one of rest, so to speak, in that grand progress, and we have reached it only after incurring the whole force of divine providence up to this point. And before us, both in grace and in providence, both in time and in eternity, are other immense developments, other immense cycles. It is nothing that these rests are long or short, compared with each other, whether in the past or in the future ; they all influence each other—they are all parts of one whole ; and some insight into all of them, into their relations to each other, and into the grand whole they all make up, is necessary to the clear knowledge of any part ; as, for example, the part now appertaining to us, and in connection with which we must be saved, or must perish. It is this total administration of divine grace in its whole progress, and in its whole connection, which I call the *Œconomy of the Covenant of Redemption*, and whose general appreciation seems to be the necessary conclusion of the foregoing chapters of this Book, and to be necessarily preliminary to the exhibition, in the next Book, of the work of salvation within us.

3. In attempting to sketch in a very narrow compass, an outline so vast, in which questions so immense occupy an area extending from the beginning to the end of time—and stretching both ways into eternity ; it behooves, not only, that we walk very carefully in the light of God, but that every step be taken very humbly before him. Recognizing the whole as a manifestation of God, I have exhibited aspects of it, more or less extensive, in various parts of the Treatise of *The Knowledge of God Objectively Considered;* and especially in the Fourth Book of that Treatise, which is devoted expressly to the consideration of those manifestations of God whereby all our knowledge of him is obtained. I have occupied a considerable portion of the chapters which treat of Divine Providence, of the New Creation, and of the Sacred Scriptures, with various illustrations of this great topic. What I shall further say will be in the way of completing and generalizing the subject, with special reference to its use in this place ; praying the reader who will honour me so far, to examine what I have advanced in the chapters just alluded to.

II.—1. The condition of man is represented to us in the Scriptures in a fourfold aspect. His original condition was perfect, but fallible ; in which our first parents alone existed—and from which they fell by transgression. By that fall the whole race came into its second condition, which is one of weakness and depravity ; in which it underlies the sentence of God pronounced at the fall, and awaits the final sentence of the great day. The third condition of man is one of begun recovery ; regenerated and partially sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and enjoying union and communion with the Saviour Christ Jesus ; which condition is not universal of all men—but only of all penitent and believing sinners. The fourth condition of man is one of perfect restoration and eternal glory and blessedness ; which is the final estate, not of all men, but only of just men made perfect, through the complete fruition of God in Christ. The impenitent and the unbelieving perish in their sin—endless perdition being the final condition of ungodly men. The original condition of fallible perfection, was the one to which the Covenant of Works applied ; and the object of that covenant was to relieve man from the peril arising from the fallibility of his nature, to invest the human race with the absolute possession of a life at once perfect and immortal, and to secure to it the perpetual augmentation of glory and blessedness

therein. The Covenant of Grace applies to the second condition of man, namely, to his fallen, weak, and depraved condition; and its object is to restore man, through a Saviour, and by means of a new creation, to the image, the service, and the enjoyment of God in this life, and to the complete and endless fruition of him in a better life to come. It has therefore no relation to man except as he is considered, first, in his sins, then as penitent and believing, then as carried forward through his new life to his immortal inheritance. Grace and glory for fallen men, are the sum of its proposals.

2. However various the aspects of God's merciful dealings with sinful men may seem, there never was but one divine way of salvation revealed; and there never was but one divine method of making that way of salvation effectual. That method always was and needs must be, as it regarded man, by divine assistance through divine love; granting to us pardon for our sins on account of the satisfaction of Christ, and renewing our nature by the Holy Ghost, so that we might, by Faith, accept the righteousness of Christ imparted us, and by Repentance turn from Satan unto God. Any thing short of this would leave salvation wholly out of our reach; while any thing essentially different from it would be wholly inapplicable to our condition. The divine way of salvation to which this divine method appertains, the fruit of infinite beneficence, wisdom, and power—always was and needs must be, by the incarnation, the obedience and sacrifice, and the glorious resurrection and ascension of the Son of God; and by the application to us by the Holy Ghost of all the benefits of the work of Christ, secured to us in the Covenant of Redemption; and as a consequence, our deliverance, restoration, and endless perfection and blessedness. Therefore the whole administration of the Covenant of Redemption necessarily embraces all that God has yet done, and all that he will ever do, in the way of grace and glory for fallen men. There never was any way of salvation for sinners, but through a Mediator; there never was, nor will be, but one Mediator between God and men; and the man Christ Jesus, is that Mediator.[1]

3. Whatever is unto salvation, under whatever aspect, at whatever period, and by whatever means, is therefore of mere grace: yea, free, sovereign, efficacious, special, eternal grace.

[1] 1 Tim., ii. 5.

This grace is absolutely and exclusively in, by, and through the Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace ; out of whom there is no grace of God unto the salvation of fallen men. This grace and salvation, are unto all the redeemed through Faith and Repentance, covenanted through the blood of the Son of God ; both in that he was a party to the eternal covenant, in that he represented them as their head therein, and in that God renews the covenant with each one of them upon his actual union with Christ. And all the blessings and benefits of all this covenanted mercy, are actually applied by the Holy Ghost, in time and eternity, to every soul saved out of our lost race, from the fall of Adam to the end of time.[1]

4. The progress of divine grace in the soul, is represented by the Saviour to be like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened.[2] God reveals himself in the hearts of his people by little and little ; leading them powerfully, but almost imperceptibly, from one degree of grace and strength unto another, until all of them in Zion appear perfect before him. It is in this way also, that he has developed the plan of salvation, and led his Church across the ages with a constantly increasing light. One dispensation has emerged from the bosom of another, as each in succession accomplished its own special end ; all tending in the same direction—all constituting portions of one great Œconomy of Grace. A covenant from eternity was proclaimed for the first time as a practical remedy for sin, in God's sentence upon Satan for his part in the fall of man, even before he passed sentence upon man. Its development through all time is the most glorious manifestation of God to the universe. Its consummation will occur at the delivery up of the Kingdom it has created, by the Son to the Father, upon the Lamb's Book of Life ; and God will be all and in all. But from that point a new and higher glory for eternity will begin—the precise nature of which, eternity itself must unfold.

5. It necessarily follows, and the Scriptures expressly teach, that the Jewish system was as really a dispensation of the Covenant of Redemption as the Christian system is :[3] and that from Adam to Moses the same covenant, though differently adminis-

[1] 1 Cor., iii. 31–33 ; Heb., vi. 13–20 ; Rom., viii. *passim*.

[2] Matt., xiii. 33.

[3] Heb., viii., ix., x.

tered, was as really administered as it was during the personal ministry of Christ, or is now.[1] The Saviour promised to Adam, was the same Saviour promised more explicitly to Abraham, to Moses, and to all the Prophets; the same who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, who is now preached unto the Gentiles, and who will judge the world in righteousness. It also follows of neccessity, and the Scriptures expressly teach, that however the administration of the covenant may have varied, from period to period, in its outward application to the elect; yet, under every successive dispensation of it, the means provided were sufficient and effectual for the comfort and salvation of those who received them, under whatever form, and in whatever stage of the divine Œconomy.[2] For the Spirit of God was always in the Church of God, and with the redeemed of God, making effectual application of the existing means of grace to the souls of all believers.[3] Nor must it be overlooked, that the extraordinary dealings of God with his people, in the way of divine guidance and support, were always great and striking in proportion as the ordinary means of grace existing under the particular dispensation were, as compared with other means of grace, either small or obscure. Nothing is more striking than this: and we need only compare carefully the present condition of the Church in these respects, with its condition under any former dispensation, to appreciate the importance of the truth stated.

III.—1. The whole Œconomy of the Covenant of Grace thus contemplated, suggests two aspects which, taken together, present for our consideration a complete outline of it. The first of these exhibits the covenant considered in its essence, in its analogy with the Covenant of Works; and discloses to us the agreement, and the difference between the two—and therein the nature and the state of man under each. The second opens before us the whole progress and development of God's mercy unto the salvation of fallen men, under all the successive dispensations of the Covenant of Redemption; and furnishes us with the means of appreciating distinctly our actual position in this divine administration. What is meant by the essence of this covenant, which on one side is to be compared with the Covenant of Works, and on the other side is to be traced through a manifold

[1] Rom., iv. 2; Gal., iii. 7–14.

[2] Heb., xi., *passim*.

[3] John, viii. 56; 1 Cor., x. 1–4.

progress of its own; is that wherein its own nature and unity consist. For what it provided was always the same eternal life, under the same peculiar form of life, namely, that of fallen men restored to the lost image of God. And the way in which this was provided was always through a Mediator between God and fallen men, and always through the same Mediator, to wit, Immanuel—the Messiah of the Jewish Scriptures—the Christ of the Christian Scriptures—the author and the giver of that eternal life. And the method by which that eternal life was always bestowed on fallen men, was in that they were divinely enabled and inclined to exercise Repentance toward God, and Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. However various may be the manifestations of this covenant, however distinct its successive dispensations, or however wide the difference between the first and the last aspect of its vast Œconomy; its absolute oneness cannot be disputed, when the same grace reigned, the same salvation is propounded, the same Saviour is held forth, the same method of union with him is exhibited for the rescue of the same fallen race, throughout.

2. The most fundamental points of agreement between these two covenants may, perhaps, be stated in the following manner:

(*a*) Both of them are the product of divine wisdom and love, and are addressed with divine authority and power to the particular conditions of human nature, which they respectively contemplate: while both of them were proofs of infinite condescension on the part of God, and proposed unspeakable and eternal mercies to man.

(*b*) Both of them propose an identical, and peculiar method on the part of God, of dealing with his creature man; a method we express by the word *Covenant.* Whereby God, in order to confirm and augment the blessedness of man before he fell, and in order to restore, increase, and perpetuate that blessedness after man had fallen; propounded to man the attainment of an infinite reward, upon conditions which, while they were obligatory on God, were so full of goodness to man, that nothing could prevent his reaping the promised reward, except deliberate rejection of his Creator before the fall, and deliberate rejection of his Saviour after the fall.

(*c*) And as touching these conditions themselves, both cov-

enants agree in this, that the head of those to be benefitted under each, to wit, Adam under the first, and Christ under the second, so stood for and represented them, that the triumph or failure of that head should be decisive concerning every one he represented. Upon this great and identical principle the condition and the reward of the first covenant, to wit, perfect obedience and endless perfection, became by its breach by Adam utterly impossible under it; and the conditions and reward of the second covenant, to wit, Faith and Repentance, and salvation as the result, became infallibly certain by the execution of it by Christ.

(*d*) Both of them demanded on the part of the creature a righteousness that would satisfy a divine law and a holy God; and both of them required the same, and a peculiar kind of righteousness, to wit, that which is manifested by the perfect love of God and of our neighbour. And both of them proposed to secure to every one represented in them respectively, the absolute certainty of possessing this righteousness in a peculiar and an identical manner, to wit, by means of their union with him who was their head. On the one hand, having the righteousness of Adam, had he stood, imputed to them; on the other hand, having the righteousness of Christ imputed to them. In like manner, on the one hand having the righteousness of Adam's nature, had he stood, inherited by means of a natural generation; on the other hand having the righteousness of Christ wrought in them, by means of supernatural regeneration. In both instances, the righteousness to be obtained by the head under each covenant, and to be manifested as above set forth, was a divine righteousness in this, namely, that it was the righteousness of perfect conformity to a divine law.

(*e*) Both covenants proposed to deal with men in two ways, very dissimilar in themselves and extremely difficult to be perfectly reconciled with each other; yet both absolutely inherent in the nature of man and of both covenants. That is, they proposed to deal with men considered as a race—which they are; and also considered as individual persons, which they are. Both of them in the development of this double aspect of humanity, and of the divine mode of dealing with it by covenant; provided, as has been shown, a common head. In each of them successively our destiny as a race was so decided, as that our personal responsibility was nevertheless secured, and our individual freedom pre-

served. If we were to conceive of either covenant as annihilating the total influence of the other, in that case the reign of one—either one—would be absolute and universal: all saved—or all lost. Except in that way, we cannot conceive of any other result, than a mixed one, founded upon the existence of both covenants, and upon their peculiar and identical manner of contemplating and dealing with humanity.

(*f*) In effect, therefore, both covenants agree in this also, that neither of them had an absolute and universal efficacy, unto a specific result. To a certain intent both of them had: to a certain intent neither had. They limit each other—in a peculiar way, difficult to express, but practically perfectly obvious. Through Adam—ultimately—some men—not all men—perish: through Christ—ultimately—some men—not all men—are saved. As there is but one human race, and that determinate before God in the total number of its individuals: the saved and the lost are its two factors—each diminishing the whole by its own amount; each representing the finality of one covenant in the respect now considered. On the other hand, it will be forever true that all men were once sinners, and the whole of our universe polluted; and it will be equally true that in a certain sense the whole universe will be retrieved from sin, and that death itself shall die. Still the universality is peculiar, and is responsive in both cases. But these mysteries are very high, and should be handled with the dread of God upon us.

3. The most fundamental points of difference between the two covenants, may, perhaps, be stated as follows:

(*a*) As the conditions of humanity to which the two covenants were respectively addressed were wholly different, the immediate object of them, respectively, was also different. The first covenant found man perfect, but fallible; and what it immediately proposed was to deliver him from the peril of that fallibility, and to confirm and augment forever his existing perfection. The second covenant found man fallen and depraved; and its immediate object was to extricate him from his condition of ruin, and from the endless perdition to which he was hastening; and to confer on him endless glory and felicity, by restoring him in this life to the lost image of God through a new creation, and by bringing him through death and the resurrection to an immortal existence with God.

(*b*) They necessarily differed in the way of accomplishing their object respectively. Though it was unto life, and through divine goodness, and by way of covenant, in both instances; in the first, it was from God to his creature who was already perfect, in the second from God to his creature fallen from his perfection and wholly depraved. The whole way of the first covenant, therefore, was through the headship of a mere man; while the whole way of the second was through the headship of the God-man. The way of the first was thoroughly natural; the way of the second was thoroughly supernatural. And this is a difference stupendous in itself, and decisive throughout.

(*c*) They differed, utterly, in the inherent force of each, and thereby, in the result to which each tended. The exact execution of each would produce precisely that to which it was competent—no more, no less. But the first had in Adam no resources except such as existed in human nature, perfect but fallible; while the second had in Christ all the resources ever possible in human nature—and all the resources of the divine nature besides. To say the very least, the first tended to failure as strongly as to success; for it actually failed, and that, as far as we know, under the first temptation. Nor, according to any mode of judging, competent to human reason, or revealed to us by God, are we able to understand how such a covenant could have avoided the equal hazard of failure at every trial, and therefore, apparently, failure at last. On the other hand, it is wholly inconceivable how the second could fail: and the Scriptures plainly tell us, it cannot.

(*d*) The first covenant was founded, so to speak, upon what was already known to man, either as written on his heart by God, or as added in the great acts of God toward man in his primeval state, anterior to the existence of this covenant; to which its own explicit and merciful, but brief statements, were added. But it neither promised, nor provided, nor gave any additional strength to any who might seek to perform its conditions and reap its reward. The second covenant in its whole foundation and compass propounds a new creation for man—an additional revelation to man, every part of which is of transcendent import to him, and for the boundless glory of God. And this covenant promises, provides, and gives to every one who seeks to perform its conditions, and reap its rewards, all grace, and light, and

strength, for every time of need. And the divine revelation which discloses it, is so completely the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, that the very sum of the covenant is, that God will be their God, and that they shall be his people.[1]

(*e*) The first covenant secured to us life, upon condition that retaining the righteousness we had already, we should first secure the additional righteousness to be obtained by the further perfect obedience required in it. The second covenant secures to us both life and the righteousness required in order thereto ; it does this while, having no righteousness of our own, we were dead in sin ; it does it by making the obedience of faith, instead of any perfect obedience of our own, the method of the righteousness which God accepts.[2] United in a Covenant of Works, with our covenanted and natural head—who was a mere man—we can be made partakers of nothing higher than his estate, and can be made partakers of a righteousness like his only in our perfect obedience. United in a Covenant of Grace with our covenanted and supernatural head, who is the Lord from heaven, we are made partakers of his grace and his glory, through no righteousness at all of our own, nor through any obedience of ours, except that of faith ;[3] but through the righteousness of God, by faith in Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe.[4]

(*f*) As these two covenants relate to sin and to sinners, the difference between them is absolute. The first revealed sin and rebuked it, and left sinners to endure its fearful penalty ; the second reveals the pardon of sin and the deliverance of sinners, through the Mediator, whom it provides. The one is a dispensation of wrath and death to fallen men ; the other is a dispensation of grace, mercy, peace, and eternal life even to the chief of sinners. The one has no remedy for any sin—but death ; the other glories most of all, that it is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by Jesus Christ. The one grounds all its proceedings against every one who underlies its terrible penalty, upon the personal condition of the culprit, individually considered ; the other grounds every thing upon Christ alone, and upon the personal condition of each individual considered merely

[1] Jer., xxxi. 33 ; Rom., i. 16.
[2] Rom., iii. 21, 22 ; v. 1 ; Eph., ii. 8.
[3] Rom., xvi. 26.
[4] Rom., iii. 22.

with reference to his relation to Christ. As so profound and pervading in the Covenant of Grace is this idea of Mediation and Redemption, of which the Covenant of Works knows nothing, except that when it encounters Christ its claims are ended and its power broken ; that the whole church of the living God, the whole Messianic Kingdom, the entire New Creation, will be delivered up to God the Father, at the consummation of all things, merely upon the Lamb's Book of Life.[1]

4. This survey, imperfect and condensed as it is, exhibits an outline of the entire dealings of God with man, in the way of covenant ; and except in the work of creation, and in those great providential acts of which I have spoken so often, which immediately followed it and preceded the Covenant of Works—God's entire dealings with man have been of that kind most distinctly set forth under the idea of a covenant. Moreover, it is by comparing the two covenants through which God has disclosed his purpose in the creation of man, with each other, as has been done, that we obtain the clearest general conception of both of them ; just as it is by following the gradual and steadfast development of the one which now involves all the hopes of the human race, which I am about to attempt, that we obtain the clearest general conception of the precise point in its sublime progress, which touches our actual and individual position. Such a survey as I shall briefly attempt, would be at once useless and impossible, but for the unity of this second covenant thus variously administered, and but for the divine unity of the Scriptures which disclose it, and of the infinite intellect and will from which those Scriptures proceed. And it seems impossible to doubt, after any serious comparison of that covenant with the one which preceded it, that both of them proceed from the same divine source, and have reference to the same race of creatures. Contemplating that race from a widely different point of view, but directed alike to the securing and advancing its felicity and glory, they necessarily provide a way peculiar to each. Agreeing in all that is covered by its being the same God, the same race, and the same great object ; differing in all that is covered by one of them being a Covenant of Works for the advancement of a perfect but fallible race, while the other is a Covenant of Grace for the recovery of the same race fallen, but susceptible of resto-

[1] Phil., iv. 3 ; Rev., xiii. 8 ; xx. 12 · xxi. 27.

ration, and for its advancement beyond what was possible if it had never fallen.

IV.—1. He whom God distinguished above all mortals in the gift of wisdom, has warned us with great emphasis that it is the glory of God to conceal a thing.[1] Long before Solomon, the greatest of all the men of the East, a man perfect and upright, as we are divinely told, had taught that God holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it.[2] And long after Job, he who was not a whit behind the chiefest Apostle, exclaimed in the wonder of his marvellous insight of divine things, Oh! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God![3] If there be any thing which can be subjected to human scrutiny, which is above all other things calculated to beget the state of mind thus variously expressed by men so great, so illustrious, and so taught of God; it is undoubtedly, this very progress of the saving grace of God in its amazing movement along the course of time. How slight and indistinct are the first obscure promises of the Saviour, compared with the light and majesty of his personal ministry! Yet how indistinct was his veiled glory in his estate of humiliation, compared with the unutterable glory in which every eye shall see him, and all the kindreds of the earth wail because of him! We must bear in mind, however, that it is not the purpose of God which is indistinct; but it is the knowledge of it by man which from obscure beginnings, is increased under each successive dispensation, like the path of the just, a shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. And the greatness of that glory which God conceals, and the majesty of that dominion over whose face he spreads his cloud, and the unsearchable riches of his divine wisdom and knowledge, are in nothing more distinctly proved, than in the vastness of the force which is seen to reside in this mighty power of God unto salvation, even when it is most indistinctly proclaimed to man. When God said to Satan that the seed of the woman should bruise his head—the simple utterance involved a total change in the posture of the human race, and of the whole universe. Yet how have sixty centuries developed that utterance!

2. As we attempt to follow this great Œconomy of the Covenant of Grace, and to compare its several aspects at its several

[1] Prov., xxv. 2. [2] Job, xxvi. 9. [3] Rom., xi. 33.

stages, with each other; we find one clear and universal principle running through the whole process. The more perfectly this covenant is developed, the greater is the distinctness given to the points in which it differs from the Covenant of Works. The farther back we go, concealing as we go back the knowledge we leave behind us, and which did not appertain to the ages we pass over, the less distinctly do we see the Saviour and his cross: while, contrariwise, the more each successive dispensation rises in the bosom of this great Œconomy of salvation, the more distinct is the vision of the Messiah, and the more conspicuously is he the centre of all grace. Everywhere, as I have already shown, the essence of the covenant is present, and is exhibited more or less distinctly. But as we find the natural life of men gradually shortened and degraded, we find the reality and the peculiar nature of immortal life which is to supplant it, more clearly disclosed. As the utter inability and unwillingness of fallen men to know God by their own wisdom, or to retain the knowledge of him when it was divinely imparted to them, became more desperately confirmed; the full knowledge of that Saviour who is the true God and eternal life, is more plainly exhibited. And as the total inefficacy of any law, any rite, any type, any shadow, to supply completely the place of grace and truth in leading fallen men to believe in the Saviour unto life everlasting, was more copiously exhibited; the real power whereby sinners do believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, is more explicitly held forth in the demonstration of the Holy Ghost. And so this greatest work of God exhibits the same method which is disclosed in all other works of his: and this most glorious of all the parts of the eternal dispensation of the Son of God, is characterized by the same sublime progress, after the same divine method, as all the other parts. Cycle after cycle—ineffable repose and then divine work—the omnific Word and the life-giving Spirit—exact concatenation of every part and majestic assent of the whole to an infinite consummation! And herein is that dispensation* of the fulness of times wherein God will gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—even in him.[1]

3. Throughout the whole Œconomy of the Covenant of Grace, in all its dispensations, there is present every mark of

* Οικονομια—*Œconomy.*

[1] Eph., i. 10.

that enduring unity which distinguishes every part of the dealings of God, and which has been already pointed out as manifested by a comparison of this with the preceding covenant. At the same time we encounter the widest variety of application: a variety demanded, as between the covenants, by the changed nature of the creature; and as between the various dispensations of the latter covenant, by the constant and progressive changes in his condition, and by the successive manifestations of divine grace. The more carefully we explore all these dispensations—the antediluvian—the patriarchal—the Jewish—the Christian; the more deeply we consider those secondary variations to which these dispensations are subject within themselves, or the eternal results to which they all conduct; the more do we everywhere behold the stedfast and unshaken progress of God's eternal counsel for the manifestation of his own glory, in bringing fallen men to the saving knowledge and endless fruition of himself. All the glory and blessedness reserved in heaven for them that love God, is more than can be fathomed by us now—more than flesh and blood can comprehend, much less inherit. But as we behold the deep foundations which God has laid, and as we trace them back into eternity; it is not presumption, it is simple faith, which prompts and sustains the profound assurance, that these are the very foundations upon which our souls rest, and that we may safely follow them into the world to come, and rest eternity upon them.

V.—1. Adam—Noah—Abraham—Moses—Christ—the Gospel Church—the Millennial state—the Glorified state; to which add the second coming of the Lord—the Resurrection of the dead—and the eternal Judgment—in some connection with the last two states of the Church. These are familiar words to the children of God. Do they not know that he who understands all they imply, understands all that is involved in creation, providence, grace, and glory? Let us pause at the sixth phrase —*the Gospel Church*: it is there, now eighteen centuries from its origin, that we stand to-day. Before its origin, five distinct epochs covering forty centuries. Until our period shall close—who can tell how long? The five phrases which follow are constantly on the lips of Christian people, in some sense or other: but in what sense exactly, or even in what supposed order and connection as to most of them? Whatever all these phrases

may express, when fully understood—this much is certain, that all of them relate, in the most distinct manner, to the Covenant of Redemption—that, taken together, they express the whole progress and result of it—and that separately, or variously combined, they indicate not only the reality, but the nature of all its great successive dispensations. It is not to ascertain particular truths, but it is to illustrate the great career of truth, that I employ them here : that immense administration which in the chapters of a former Treatise specially cited in an earlier part of this chapter, I have already briefly exhibited under three distinct aspects. Once in treating of the relations of divine providence to the Messianic Kingdom ; once in developing the progress of divine knowledge through the New Creation ; and once in treating the whole career of the Kingdom of God contemplated alike in its head, in its author, and in its members. In the present chapter—as in this First Book throughout—what is specially important is the clear appreciation of the intimate and necessary connection between the Objective and Subjective Knowledge of God ; that is, between the inner life of men, and by consequence their outward condition, whether considered as individuals or as a race, and the knowledge they possess of the true God and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent.

2. The present stand-point of the human race with reference to this glorious administration of God, is capable of a perfectly distinct appreciation, in every aspect of the whole subject, and in every relation of it to us. Of course, it is not meant that all men can know, or that any one does know, all the present, much less all the past, and least of all the whole future, touching any aspect of the Covenant of Redemption. But all men may know with infallible certainty, and immense multitudes do know, that the present condition of the human race is neither the patriarchal, nor the millennial condition of man ; that the present posture of Redemption is not the one it occupied before the Incarnation, nor the one it will occupy after the second coming of the Lord ; that from the remotest past the causes of whatever exists are made obvious to us by God, together with their constant working, and their present state ; that all that is actual to us now is manifestly full of all future results ; and that multitudes of those results, in all their overwhelming vastness, are so revealed to us by God that the knowledge of them and the effects

of them are really and effectually, though not perfectly and completely appreciable by us. The very thought and the very illustration used by the Apostle Paul, still apply as distinctly to us as to those he personally addressed; for, if I may illustrate the work of grace by the work of creation, the evening and the divine repose of the Gospel day, which we call long and God calls short—still continue, and the millennial morning and work which may complete that Gospel day are not yet come. Therefore said Paul, and we may repeat, But now we see not as yet all things put in subjection under the feet of the Son of Man. What we have seen is, that Jesus was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death; that he by the grace of God has tasted death for every man; and that he has been crowned with glory and honour. And we have seen, and still see, many sons of God brought to glory; we see that Christ is not ashamed to call them his brethren; and we see how infinitely it became God, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. And what we may be sure of is, that it is wholly impossible for us to escape perdition, if we neglect this great salvation, which has been spoken by the Lord, and confirmed unto us by those who heard him; God himself bearing witness both with signs and wonders, and the Holy Ghost with divers miracles and gifts.[1]

3. From this point, looking back to the fall of man, we hear the promise of the Seed of the woman, and see man sentenced and driven from Eden. This promise; the consecrated rest of the Sabbath day; the sacrificial recognition of God, of a Saviour, of sin, and of deliverance; the knowledge of the moral law; and the miraculous ministration of God personally and by his angels; these unitedly exhibited the antediluvial aspect of the Covenant of Redemption. The condition of human society answerable to it was characterized by the immense length of human life—by the great extent of families—by the total absence of any organization civil or sacred except that of the household—and by the universal prevalence of a single language. This was the antediluvian condition of mankind, secular and religious. It survived the catastrophe of the universal deluge—and received its first great shock at Babel in the land of Shinar, by an immediate act of God confounding the language of all the earth, and

[1] Heb., ii. *passim.*

scattering the human race abroad upon the face of all the earth.[1] Nor did the great increase of divine knowledge vouchsafed to Noah and to Abraham by God, concerning which I have treated in another place; put an absolute end to a state of the Church so remarkable; and to a state of society which still prevails in a form somewhat modified, so extensively upon earth; embracing the greater part of the descendants of Abraham himself.

4. Nothing can be more distinctly asserted than God has asserted in his blessed word, that the whole human family, except the eight persons who composed the household of Noah, were drowned in the flood; and that the whole human race afterwards existing, is descended from these eight persons; that is, except his own wife and the wives of his three sons, from Noah himself, who is the second progenitor of the race.[2] It is in the covenant which God made with this preacher of righteousness, as the Scriptures call Noah,[3] that the nature and foundation of civil government, more extensive than that of the household, and as a divine institution, are first intimated, and in connection therewith the purpose of God touching the destiny of the earth and of the human race considered as inhabitants thereof, and concerning the stedfastness of nature while man and the earth shall exist in their present relations to each other; in confirmation of which he set his bow in the cloud, that man might see it and trust God. It can add nothing decisive to the matter immediately before us, to discuss those permanent physical changes, real or imaginary, upon the earth itself, and upon its relations to our solar system, over which the learned have disputed; which I therefore pass in silence. But it is important to observe that the second great shock to the unity of mankind, in the establishment of distinct varieties of the race, has, even to the present moment, permanent relations to the family of Noah. It is a new world of which he is the head. Its life is shortened, its language is confounded, its unity is disturbed, a new condition of society is divinely provided for, and initiated under Nimrod in Shinar, and Asshur at Nineveh: and all these things are before our eyes, after so many centuries, in forms unspeakably aggravated. The Œconomy of Redemption alone advances. The lines of Shem, and Ham, and Japhet, and even Canaan the son of Ham, are traced far enough to show all coming ages the origin of all nations and

[1] Gen., xi. 1–9. [2] Gen., vi.—xi. [3] 2 Pet., ii. 5.

peoples.[1] Then, dropping all the rest, the line of Shem is traced to Abraham,[2] and through him to Christ ; in whom, after so many ages, those omitted Gentiles are to be restored to God ; in whom, rejected by his own to whom he came, it is this day preëminently those omitted Gentiles to whom God has granted repentance unto life, and out of whom he is taking a people for his name.[3]

5. The patriarch Abraham was the lineal descendant of Shem in the tenth generation ; and of his life on earth of one hundred and seventy-five years, one hundred and ten years coincided with the latter part of the life of his great ancestor. Leaving the ark when he was about a hundred years old, Shem lived about five hundred years in the post-diluvian world—and may have been for more than a century, perfectly familiar with the father of the Faithful ; about thirty-five years of which period were after the divine call, of which I have now to speak.[4] But Shem had passed a hundred years in the antediluvian world, the whole of which he may have passed in the company of Methuselah who was his father's grandfather ; and above two hundred and forty years of the entire life of Methuselah coincided with the later years of Adam, his sixth lineal ancestor.[5] Two persons, one of them the great grandfather of the other, separate between Adam and Abraham ; these two companions, it may have been, for a century ; the first a companion of Adam for two centuries and a half ; the second a companion of Abraham for more than a century. Moreover, the interval between Adam and Noah was but a century and a quarter, and that between Noah and Abraham was less than half a century : the two lives of Adam and Noah covering eighteen hundred and eighty years of the whole period from the creation to the birth of Abraham—and leaving a comparatively short interval before, and a still shorter one after Noah. It is Noah, therefore, in reality, who connects Adam with Abraham—the first man with the father of the Faithful. His marvellous life, resting for five centuries on the world before the flood, and for four and a half centuries on the world after the flood ; constituted an astonishing epoch in the Œconomy of Redemption, and at the same time afforded the means of transit between the Adamic and the Abrahamic epochs, each of them as illustrious as itself.

6. The dispensation which extends from the call of Abraham

[1] Gen., x. [2] Gen., xi. [3] Acts, xi. 18 ; xv. 14. [4] Gen., xi. [5] Gen., v.

and God's covenant with him, to the Exodus from Egypt under Moses and the giving of the Law, occupied according to the received chronology, for which we have the authority of the Apostle Paul, a period of four hundred and thirty years.[1] The greater part of the Book of Genesis, and a considerable portion of the Book of Exodus, are devoted to it; and it is a subject of continual allusion and explanation throughout the Scriptures. The distinct accounts we have of Melchizedeck, who was cotemporary with Abraham,[2] of Jethro, who was cotemporary with the earlier ministry of Moses,[3] and of Balaam, who witnessed almost its close;[4] give us clear intimations of the existing state of divine knowledge, and of human affairs; and these are confirmed by multitudes of allusions and incidents found in the sacred narrative—and rendered certain by the Book of Job, who was, it is probable, earlier than Moses and later than Abraham. The call of Abraham, was in effect the rejection of the whole race besides; and the tendency of the whole race, as such, has been continual and decisive against God. The sacrament of circumcision given to Abraham, created for the first time a precise, visible separation between those in covenant with God, and all beside; and the sacrament of the passover, whose institution signalized the close of this dispensation, as circumcision did its commencement, made this separation still more complete, by exhibiting still more clearly, the ground, the nature, and the object of it. These sacraments entered in a fundamental manner, into the next succeeding dispensation; and passing under new forms, by the ordination of Christ himself, into the bosom of the Gospel Church, they still survive as signs and seals of the Covenant of Redemption. The covenant which God made with Abraham, to whom he appeared seven or eight times,[5] was manifold in its aspect. It was a covenant personally between God and the patriarch, embracing himself and all his posterity, and stipulating for great blessings temporal and spiritual to him and to them. It was a Covenant between God and Abraham, embracing after a peculiar manner, his descendants through Isaac, which embraced all the Jewish people, and the land of Canaan as their inheritance. It was a covenant between God and Abraham, wherein the patriarch was accepted as the father of all believers, and all of them received

[1] Gal., iii. 17. [2] Gen., xiv.; Heb., vii. [3] Ex., xviii.
[4] Num., xxii.—xxiv. [5] Gen. xii.—xxiii.

unspeakable promises in him. And above all, it was a covenant between God and Abraham wherein the patriarch was accepted as the representative of humanity itself; and as such received promises for all the kindreds of the earth, and above all promises, that of the Saviour of the world, as his seed.[1] In all these aspects, this amazing covenant has accomplished its stipulations through all succeeding time. In the promised line of the family of Abraham, the visible church of God became immediately conspicuous. In the form of a great people it came in contact with all the great world-powers developing themselves in the post-diluvian world, according to the purpose of God revealed to Noah. And their deliverance from Egypt, their abode in the wilderness, and their triumphant settlement in the promised land—all miraculous and all typical of things far greater than themselves; were made the occasion and the means of organizing that theocratic commonwealth of the Jews, which constituted so remarkable an epoch in the Œconomy of Grace.

7. The institutions of Moses, established about twenty-five centuries after the creation, continued with divine authority for about fifteen centuries. They are capable of being considered in a threefold point of view; once in their purely civil aspect—once as a system of actual religion and positive morality—and once as a typical system involving and exhibiting more or less distinctly, a spiritual system far higher than itself. These three elements are, indeed, combined in the most intimate manner: for the system they jointly composed was to be practically administered over the most enlightened nation in the world, as at once their only temporal government, and their only way of eternal salvation. Still, from the point of view we occupy, it is not difficult to separate these elements. We readily understand that as a system of positive religion and morality, these institutions would combine and would exhibit, all that God had made known until then of the way of salvation; and that they would be fitted to receive and to preserve all immediate and all further communications of his grace. Thus we find them grounded upon the Moral Law, which God had written on the heart of man when he created him, and which he now wrote on tables of stone; we find the revelation of divine grace, of a Saviour from sin, and of life through him, the burden of the entire system; and we find

[1] Rom., iv. *passim;* Gal., iii. *passim;* Rom., ix. *passim.*

the sum of all the past history of Redemption reduced to a written form, and the continuance and perpetuity of that sacred record made one of the chief distinctions of a dispensation, attested by so many and such stupendous miracles, and replenished with such fulness of divine inspiration. Omitting the Book of Job which is probably a monument of the Abrahamic dispensation, the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures belong to this era. In like manner, we easily perceive, that all that was purely typical in the institutions of Moses, was exhausted and cancelled when that became actual which it only signified; and we perceive as well, that institutions replenished with such types of better things to come, bear in their own bosom at once the proof and the cause of their own weakness and decay. Touching the Mosaic institutions considered as a purely civil polity, my impression is that men have never adequately conceived either their nature or their design. Civil institutions higher than the household, had no existence amongst men, and no revealed authority from God, before the flood. The purpose of God to organize society, and to organize his own kingdom in the world, both more completely than before—was first made known to Noah and to Abraham; and both parts of the purpose in its earliest development, were exhibited in this theocratical commonwealth. There are interests of mankind absolutely temporal, and there are evils to which man is unavoidably subject in a state of sin: the former inseparably incident to his mortal existence, the latter to his mortal existence as a sinner. What seems to me to be taught by the civil institutions of the Jewish people, and that upon the authority of God himself—is the great principles and truths which underlie the most successful treatment of all such interests, and all such evils. Human civilization, human progress, human liberty and security; property in its own nature, use, and liability; rights and duties of the citizen, whether public, social, or personal; misdemeanours, crimes, and punishments; the great problems which connect themselves with national independence, and with the public force, and general prosperity; those vast and intricate questions connected with trade, money, pauperism, and servitude. These are the topics to which Moses addressed himself: and while I am obliged to admit that no competent annotator known to me, has expounded his wonderful conceptions; I do not hesitate to assert that what

he has taught, seems to me to be replenished with divine wisdom.

8. This Jewish state preceded the existence of all those universal world-powers which the post-diluvian principle of human society developed. In its career it came in contact with all four of them, and perished finally under the blows of the last and greatest of them all—after Messiah had come, and been crucified. Daniel, its great apocaliptic Prophet, in his captivity at Babylon under the first of them, revealed the career and fate of them all, and especially of the first three : and John, the great apocaliptic Prophet of the Christian dispensation, in his captivity at Patmos under the last of them, took up the sublime vision where Daniel left it, and made it complete. Nothing is so astonishing as the catastrophe of the Jewish state, the Jewish institutions, and the Jewish people. The Messiah, in whose name the theocratic commonwealth had been founded and always administered, to whom every thing tended, and of whom every thing was full, came at last, only to be rejected and set at nought. They said, Let his blood be upon us, and upon our children ! Fearful words—fearfully accomplished ! Their divine commonwealth utterly subverted—their divine institutions supplanted by the still more glorious institutions of the Saviour, whom they caused to be crucified—and themselves, the seed of Abraham, the children of the covenant, and the chosen people of God, wanderers for eighteen centuries, the wonder and the opprobrium of mankind. Solemn and true are those words—The wild dove has her nest, and the fox has his cave ; mankind have their country ; what has Israel but the grave ?

9. The Word was made flesh, says the Apostle John, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.[1] This is the great parable which, from the beginning of time, has been on the lips of all the redeemed : the Word made flesh—grace and truth—the glory of the only begotten of the Father ! This is the significance of the incarnation, the crucifixion, and the ascension, the second coming of the Lord. This is the meaning of that great day of Pentecost—this is the sum of our Christian Revelation—this explains the Gospel Church throughout its whole career—this is the intent of this dispensation of the Holy

[1] John, i. 14.

Ghost with power. The glory of the only begotten of the Father—grace and truth—the Word made flesh! This is the cry with which the tribes and kindreds of mankind rise from the dust and look abroad upon the day, and return to the brightness of Zion and the glory of her rising. This is the burden of the hymn of every soldier of the cross, whether it be a hymn of victory, or of martyrdom, on earth—or of hosannah in the highest, in the realms of light. This, therefore, is our posture this day: the Gospel Church—the dispensation of the Holy Ghost—the great parable of the Word made flesh—grace and truth—the glory of the only begotten of the Father!

10. If it can be thought sufficient, after all that has been said, to pass over, with a brief general statement, the glorious epoch of the personal ministry of Christ, and that of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, the founding of the Gospel Church, and its progress until now: it could hardly be excused, in this connection, and considering how much it may be needful to say hereafter, to enter particularly upon those great dispensations which are still future. It is not indeed the particular object of this Treatise, to trace the career of the Church of God; but to exhibit the truth of God, in its simplicity and power, subjectively in its effectual working upon and in the soul of man, and the effects which necessarily result therefrom. To a certain extent, as has been shown, the whole preceding Œconomy of Redemption is involved in the just appreciation of what is now actual, and of its effects: to a certain extent, all its future Œconomy is involved in like manner—but is involved more generally, and more distinctly as a consequence than a cause of our union with Christ—as results rather than means of salvation. The future of that great Œconomy, therefore, except as it helps to determine our actual position, falls more naturally for its precise consideration, towards the close than towards the commencement of an inquiry into the Knowledge of God Subjectively considered. For the present it may be sufficient, in addition to the general statements already made, to say, that what is actual, or what is past, is not more certain nor more distinct in its great outline, than is all the future of this vast Œconomy. Nor is that which exists connected with what has gone before more strictly, than what is to come is connected with both. Nay, it never can be made as certain, that when we were enemies, we

were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; as it is, that being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.[1] And so of all the rest.

11. The Scriptures warn us with great emphasis, that divine truth constitutes a sublime system, and that it behooves us to comprehend and respect its divine proportion—not less than to possess with clearness its separate parts. In like manner, as I have repeatedly shown, the administration of this system of truth unto salvation—constitutes a sublime Œconomy, whose divine proportion is as real and as intelligible as any particular portion of the stupendous scheme. And in both cases that which is general and that which is particular, mutually affect each other; and the two divine systems mutually influence each other; and there results from their union a third and more exalted generalization, which is the highest form of knowledge; perhaps too high for us now, but which we perceive to be real, and to contain solutions, which are, as yet, beyond our reach. How continually are we obliged to reiterate the outlines of the plan of salvation, in order that we may feel the highest force of each part of it? In the same way the parts of this perpetual administration of salvation enter into its whole Œconomy. It is not merely names, and dates, and epochs, and helps to the memory: it is the recognition of an unbroken concatenation of God's working, the appreciation of a stedfast progress of that working in the development of his eternal counsel, that the words Adamic, Noacic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, signify when applied to ancient dispensations. And the very same thing is intended when we speak of the personal ministry of Christ—of the dispensation of the Spirit and the Gospel Church state; and again the very same touching the millennial and heavenly states, with all their wonders, which are still to come. What I urge is this insuperable concatenation between all the parts of this infinite Œconomy—this sublime progress of the whole; the overwhelming grandeur and efficacy of the Knowledge of God attainable in this manner: and the intense relation of the whole aspect of divine things, thus exhibited, to the Covenant of Redemption as it involves, on one side, the glory of God, and as it reveals and applies, on the other side, the power of God unto salvation.

[1] Rom., v. 10.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD,

SUBJECTIVELY CONSIDERED.

ARGUMENT OF THE SECOND BOOK.

This Second Book is devoted to the exposition of the work of God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, in the personal and direct application of the Knowledge of God unto the Salvation of individual men. It is the very action and crisis of the subjective consideration of the saving Knowledge of God. Every thing that has gone before, not only in the First Book of this Treatise, but in the whole of the preceding Treatise, is unto the work developed in this Book. Every thing which can follow is essentially determined by what is settled in this Book. Errors, even grave errors, heretofore or hereafter, might not be fatal: but any fatal error here is wholly destructive. For if our souls can but be saved, the rest is only secondary: but if we miss the way in the actual matter of being saved, the rest is utterly worthless. The reader can desire of me no better token, than that I take my own soul in one hand, and the light of life in the other—and bid him if he will bear me company, watch earnestly for the life of his own soul. In the First Chapter of this Book, which is the Sixth of this Treatise—the endeavour is to point out the exact manner in which we become personally interested in the salvation covenanted in Jesus Christ, and individually reap the benefit thereof, in being actually saved. Passing over much that is proved in this Chapter, the main thing established is, that a real and spiritual union is indissolubly established between the human soul and the Person of the Son of God: that, on our part, this is by means of Faith in the Divine Redeemer crucified for us—which Faith is the product of the work of God's Spirit in our soul—which work of God's Spirit is the result of our personal redemption by Christ: and that the invariable fruit of this union of the soul with Christ is our fellowship—communion—with him in Grace and in Glory—by means whereof we participate in all the blessings and benefits of the Covenant of Redemption. The Seventh Chapter, which is the Second of this Book, explains in a general manner the nature and effect of that great and decisive work of God in man, which is commonly expressed by the terms—Effectual Calling. In doing this, various incidental questions of the highest importance are discussed, such as the Natural Ability of fallen man to what is spiritually good—the nature of Free Will—the Gospel Call—what is required of man, and what he can do—the relation of certain states of the unrenewed soul to certain states of the renewed soul—the relevancy of the work of God and the nature of man to each

other; and the like. The main object being to demonstrate the reality, the nature, the manner, and the effects of a gracious, and effectual vocation by God of the soul of man unto Jesus Christ by the Holy Ghost, through the divine Word; wherein our mind is savingly enlightened, our will is renewed, our conscience is sanctified, and a new heart is given to us; the result being our present reconciliation to God, and our endless salvation. The Eighth Chapter, being the Third of this Book, is devoted to the exposition of the scriptural doctrine of man's Regeneration; wherein the teaching of Jesus Christ on this subject is carefully considered, and the relation of the doctrine taught by him, to the spiritual system of the whole Scriptures, and to human experience, is pointed out; and various incidental questions, such as the state of the soul in Regeneration—the instrumentality of divine Truth therein, and the applicability of this way of salvation to infants, are discussed. The chief matters established being—that fallen men must perish unless they are restored to the image of God: that this restoration is accomplished by a spiritual and personal renovation of our fallen nature—by the Holy Ghost through divine Truth, in and for the sake of Jesus Christ the Mediator of the Covenant of Redemption, after the model of God himself: that man incurs this change, being passive in it, after a peculiar manner: the whole being a most sovereign and gracious act of God the Creator of man, and Saviour of sinners, the most remote known reason for which in the case of each individual, is God's free, special, and eternal love for his elect. In the Ninth Chapter, which is the Fourth of this Book, the doctrine of Pardon and Acceptance of Sinners is disclosed. Its position in the Plan of Salvation is settled—its special office is disclosed—the relations of each Person of the Godhead to the matter are explained—and God shown to be most just and righteous in his gracious, complete, and gratuitous justification of regenerate sinners, for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ whose righteousness imputed to us by God, is shown to be the sole meritorious ground of the act of the Father setting us free: and Faith in Christ crucified, wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, to be the sole channel and manner of our receiving that imputed righteousness. In the course of the general argument all the main questions of an incidental kind are examined; and at the close of it, the doctrines of Covenant, of Headship, and of Imputation, are discussed in their mutual relations, and their fundamental relevancy to Salvation by Grace. The Tenth Chapter, which is the Fifth of this Book, is employed in setting forth the manner in which all regenerate and justified sinners become by Adoption, sons and heirs of God: the nature, grounds, and effects of that most gracious act of God: and the relation of the whole matter to us—to the plan of Salvation—to the Persons of the Godhead—and to the Covenant of Redemption. The analogy between the treatment of the divine Attributes, and the Graces of the Spirit in us, is disclosed: the method of explaining our salvation pointed out by the Apostle Paul in Romans viii., is expounded and applied: our relations to sin, to the law, to God's providence, and to God himself, are shown to be wholly changed by reason of his adopting us as his sons: our inheritance of all the promises of God is exhibited: our heirship of God, and our joint heirship with Christ—are proved to embrace an indefeasible title, and a present partial possession and enjoyment of the whole work and glory of God as Creator, and as Redeemer—and of God himself as our crowning inheritance. And the great sub-

ject is concluded with some brief statements concerning the principles both general and personal, and the method both abstract and practical, involved in it, and settled by it. The Eleventh Chapter, which is the Sixth of this Book, discusses the whole doctrine of Sanctification under four general divisions: in the first of which the relation of the work of Sanctification to the Plan of Salvation, and that of this grace to the great graces before explained, is disclosed: in the second, the nature and characteristics of this crowning grace, and the progress of it in the human soul, with the general exercises of the soul therein, and particularly with reference to Faith, to Repentance, and to our Love of God—are traced: in the third, the divinely appointed means of our progressive Sanctification are pointed out, and the manner of their use and influence explained: and in the fourth, the power of God in this dying unto sin, and renewing more and more in entire conformity to Christ, is vindicated—the relation of the Godhead, and each Person thereof to this work in the souls of the children of God is set forth—and the special relevancy of the death and resurrection of Christ to the perfection of the divine life in man, is proved and illustrated: the whole being an attempt to state and sum up the nature, manner, and extent of that complete conformity to God, for which all Christians are commanded to strive. In the Twelfth Chapter, which is the Seventh and last of this Book, the consummation of our communion with Christ in Grace, and the consummation of our communion with him in Glory in this life are explained, and the crowning benefits of the Covenant of Redemption bestowed on the children of God in this life, are set forth in their order, and in their connections. The attempt is made to trace the life of God in the soul of man—wholly through the domain of grace into the domain of glory; and to demonstrate the nature, reality, progress, and eternal results of the whole. In this way the First Fruits of Glory—the Earnest of the Spirit—the Sense of God's Love—Peace of Conscience—Joy in the Holy Ghost—Rejoicing in Hope of the Glory of God: also the nature and extent of the evidence which the soul may obtain and rest on: Spiritual Weakness—Distrust—Doubt—Indifference—Backsliding—Self-delusion—Perseverance—Assurance; together with the relation of death, and the resurrection, to the saints, and to the final triumph of the Mediatorial Kingdom—are brought successively under review. In this Book, therefore, Union and Communion with Christ—Effectual Calling—Regeneration—Justification—Adoption—Sanctification—and the consummation of Grace in the First Fruits of Glory, are discussed; and the Knowledge of God Subjectively Considered, is traced in its divine effects upon and in the human soul, from its first awakening to the consummation of grace: and the whole progress of the soul itself thus exercised, is disclosed, according to the measure of the grace given to me. The grand truths supposed to be established in this Book, stated systematically and in the most summary manner, are those which follow, namely:—That through the application of the benefits of the Covenant of Redemption, by the Holy Ghost, to sinners redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, they are united by Faith to the divine Saviour—and being so united to Christ, have Communion with him both in Grace and in Glory:—That by a work of divine grace, executed by divine power towards us and in us, which is the result of God's special and eternal love for us, God draws us by his Word and Spirit, to Jesus Christ his Son our

Saviour, thus reconciling unto himself by him, all who are redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ:—That by a saving work of God's Spirit in the soul, through the instrumentality of divine Truth, and for the merits' sake of Jesus Christ, our fallen and depraved nature is renewed in the image of God, and the elect of God are thus Born Again:—That by a most gracious act of God, he sets all regenerate sinners free from sin and death, accepts their persons and services as righteous, and declares their full right to eternal life, solely on account of the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and received through Faith alone:—That all sinners thus regenerated and justified, are by a most gracious act of God the Father, for the sake and on the designation of Jesus Christ, Adopted as Sons of God, made heirs of all the promises of God, heirs of God himself, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, the Son of God:—That all these Adopted Sons and heirs of God are, through a constant and increasing Sanctification, fitted for the use and enjoyment of their boundless inheritance: which occurs through the virtue of the death and Resurrection of Christ, by the indwelling of the Word and Spirit of God in their hearts: they being enabled more and more through Repentance toward God and Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, to die unto sin, to be renewed in the spirit of their mind, and to live unto righteousness:—That the children of God saved by Grace, led and taught by the Word and Spirit of God, besides enjoying all the Benefits of the Covenant of Redemption, which are bestowed on them through their Communion with Christ in Grace; may also enjoy, in this life the First Fruits of Communion with him in Glory, whereby they possess the earnest of their boundless and eternal inheritance, in a settled sense of God's love, in peace of conscience, in joy in the Holy Ghost, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

CHAPTER VI.

THE APPLICATION OF THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION TO INDIVIDUAL MEN: UNION AND COMMUNION WITH THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

I. 1. Man's Alienation from God, and Perpetual Shortcoming.—2. Perpetual Necessity for Special Divine Grace.—3. These two Facts Combined and Applied: the Result.—4. Special, Determinate, Effectual Salvation.—II. 1. Prerogatives of the Regenerate: Apostles' Creed:—(*a*) Communion of Saints:—(*b*) Forgiveness of Sins:—(*c*) Resurrection of the Body:—(*d*) Life Everlasting.—2. Divine Summary concerning these Prerogatives:—(*a*) We are *in* Christ, and he is *made unto us* Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption:—(*b*) This is *of* God, and *by* God:—(*c*) Thus we are Divinely United to Christ, and have Communion with him:—(*d*) We are Specially Called and Chosen of God hereunto:—(*e*) And that in Special Contemplation of our own Vileness;—(*f*) And to put an End to all Glorying, except in him.—III. 1. Immediate Effect of the Application to us of the Benefits of Redemption in our Union and Communion with Christ.—2. The Mystical Body thus created.—3. Matters involved in our Union with Christ:—(*a*) God gives Christ to us, to be our Saviour:—(*b*) He gives us to Christ, to be his People:—(*c*) Christ's Consent to this Union:—(*d*) Our Consent thereto:—(*e*) Unavoidable Certainty of the Result of this Union.—4. The Spiritual Means whereby this Mystical Union is effected:—(*a*) On the part of Christ, it is his own Spirit—the Holy Ghost:—(*b*) On our part, Saving Faith in the Divine Redeemer crucified for us:—(*c*) Infinite Efficacy of these Means.—IV. 1. Fellowship with Christ.—2. Fruits of our Communion with him.—3. Communion with him in Grace.—4. Communion with him in Glory.—5. Clearness and Certainty of the Results reached.

I.—1. In considering the results of God's dealings with the human race, nothing is more obvious than the utter shortcoming of man in every condition in which he has been placed. The original fall of man under the Covenant of Works; the apostacy of the race under the first dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, and its almost total destruction by the flood; the new and nearly complete rejection of God by the whole race during the Noacic dispensation, and the fearful acquiescence in that result manifested by God in the call of Abraham; the entire condition of the race thus rejecting God, as exhibited to us during the whole period covered by the Abrahamic and Mosaic

dispensations; the whole career of the Old Testament Church itself, terminating with the rejection and crucifixion of the Son of God; and now under the Gospel Church for eighteen centuries, the deplorable persecutions that Church has endured, the unspeakable evils of which its own corruptions and apostacies have been the cause, and the ceaseless triumph of every form of wickedness, in one immense portion after another of the whole race, through all these centuries! What are all these but overwhelming exhibitions of the utter shortcoming of man—the whole constituting one boundless proof of his alienation from God?

2. It has been equally manifest throughout the whole career of the human race, and throughout all God's dealings with it, that there has been a perpetual necessity on the part of God, to supplement the ordinary divine helps bestowed by him on man, with special divine aids, in order to secure to man the complete enjoyment of whatever mercies were given to him, or to obtain from him the complete discharge of whatever duties were required of him. The more perfectly we understand the condition of all things under the Covenant of Works, the more wonderful it is that man fell; and in like degree the more clear it is that it was the lack of special divine help—grace—which it was impossible for God to give consistently with the nature of the trial through which man was passing, which made that trial fatal. And the very conception of the Covenant of Grace, and its promulgation after the Fall of man; and all the successive dispensations of it from Adam to Christ; and the advent and whole work of Christ; and the outpouring and whole work of the Holy Ghost; and all the dealings of God with men under the New Testament Church: all constitute one unbroken series of the most illustrious proofs that special divine aid—grace—is the one grand and unalterable condition of duty completely discharged, and of mercy completely enjoyed. And if any thing could make the shortcoming of man more distinct, and the need of special grace more conspicuous; it would be the fact that this being, so impotent to the true and the good, is distinguished most of all by his ineffaceable conviction of the reality of truth and goodness; that this being, so averse to God, the only object of all true religion, has no impulse in his nature so deep and so stedfast as his religious impulse.

3. That all men do not participate of the blessings revealed

in Christ, and embrace the conditions of that eternal life which is brought to light through him; is therefore no more than a new illustration of the whole career of a race, whose evil deeds show that they love what God calls darkness more than what God calls light.[1] That any of them heartily embrace that mercy and completely attain that life; proves, on the other hand, that special divine aid—grace—has been given to them by God. And that God reveals and applies his merey, not to reprobate vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, but to the objects of his free and special love, making them possessors of the unsearchable riches of his grace;[2] is but the continued manifestation of his entire mode of dealing with man. However we may cavil at this, which is but a way of showing our terrible alienation from God; or however we may justly stand in awe as we behold it: we ought to be fully aware that but for this special grace of God, it is infinitely certain that not a single sinner ever would be saved. At any rate, we cannot deny the reality of this divine way of dealing through special grace, without at the same time rejecting the Scriptures as the word of God, discrediting the whole course of divine providence, refusing all credence to the total history of our race, denying the moral government of God which is administered before our face, disbelieving the testimony of every renewed soul, and silencing alike the voice of conscience and the voice of God's Spirit within us. He who can do all this, will have for his pains only this, that he is a living proof of the truth which he denies; for if grace were not special, he might not have been what he is.

4. The Word was made flesh: they that believe on his name become the sons of God: for they are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.[3] They are born again, born from above, born of the Spirit.[4] For the sons of God are as many as are led by the Spirit of God.[5] By his own blood Christ has obtained eternal redemption for us.[6] And all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him are amen unto the glory of God by us.[7] God according to his mercy saves us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should

[1] John, iii. 19. [2] Rom., ix. 22, 23; 1 Cor., ii. 8–16. [3] John, i. 12, 13.
[4] John, iii. 3–7. [5] Rom., viii. 14. [6] Heb., ix. 12. [7] 2 Cor., i. 20.

be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.[1] All that the Father giveth me, saith Christ, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.[2] Such statements as these—and the number of them throughout the Scriptures is past computation—cover the case in all its possible bearings, and hardly admit of being wrested out of their clear sense. Touching the present matter, their simple and naked declaration is, that the elect of God, being redeemed by the blood of Christ, are made partakers of all the benefits of that redemption, by the Holy Ghost. Every thing is special, every thing is determinate, every thing is effectual. Nor is it possible for us to conceive how it could be otherwise, viewed from the divine side of such questions: nor viewed from the human side of them, how it could be possible for any sinner to be saved, if it were otherwise. If we could prove that God does not choose us—what we would gain would be our infallible perdition. If we admit that he does choose us, then he must have changed his mind concerning us, or his purpose to choose us must be eternal. But he tells us plainly not only that his choosing us —our election by him—is of grace, and according to his own purpose; but that our salvation and the holy calling which fits us for it, are not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*

II.—1. The earliest, the most comprehensive, and the most universally accepted of all the summaries of faith which have existed among Christians—that which is commonly called the *Apostles' Creed*—has recapitulated the chief prerogatives of which the elect of God, by the specific application to them of the benefits of redemption by the blood of Christ, are made partakers through the Holy Ghost.[3] That ancient symbol states first the faith of all Christians concerning God the Father, secondly concerning the Son; thirdly concerning the Holy Ghost; and fourthly concerning the Church. In this last division the great prerogatives of believers are stated under four heads, thus:

[1] Titus, iii. 4–7. [2] John, vi. 37, 39.

* Κατ' *ἐκλογὴν χάριτος*. Rom., xi. 5.—Κατ' *ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις*. Rom., ix. 11.—Κατ' *ἰδίαν προθεσιν καὶ χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν ἐν* Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ *πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων*. 2 Tim., i. 9.

[3] John, i. 12, 13.

(*a*) The Communion of Saints. For we are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God ; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.[1] And we are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel.[2]

(*b*) The Forgiveness of Sins. For there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.[3] Moreover, as God not only foreknows and predestinates his children, but also justifies and glorifies them, who can gainsay these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? If God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect, when God himself justifies them?[4]

(*c*) The Resurrection of the Body. For the declaration of Christ is express that the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.[5] For the Lord Jesus Christ, if he be our Saviour, will change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself.[6] Children of the first Adam who was made a living soul, and was of the earth, earthy, we have borne the image of the earthy : children of the second Adam, who was a quickening spirit, and the Lord from heaven, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly : and thus we shall possess the kingdom which flesh and blood cannot inherit—and wherein death is swallowed up in victory.[7]

(*d*) Life Everlasting. For God will give eternal life to them

[1] Eph., ii. 19, 20. [2] Heb., xii. 22–24. [3] Rom., viii. 1, 2. [4] Rom., viii. 29–33.
[5] John, v. 28, 29. [6] Phil., iii. 20, 21. [7] 1 Cor., xv. 45–54.

who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality.[1] And though sin hath reigned unto death, even so shall grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.[2] For while the wages of sin is death, the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.[3] Yea, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.[4]

2. A summary, still more thorough and complete, of the benefits secured to us in the Covenant of Redemption, together with the ground of their bestowal on us, and the manner in which they are effectually applied to us, is furnished in a single sentence given by inspiration of God. But of him—namely, God—are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.[5] That is to say:

(*a*) We bear to Christ Jesus such a relation as God expresses by saying, *We* are *in him*: and Christ Jesus bears such a relation to us as God expresses by saying that *he is made unto us* Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.

(*b*) In both respects this relation between us and Christ Jesus has occurred in such a manner, as God expresses by saying that we are in him *of God*, and that he is made unto us *by God*.

(*c*) We being so in Christ Jesus of God, as to possess by him, and to partake through and in him of Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; and Christ Jesus being so made by God unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; we are actually united to Christ Jesus, and that by a divine work; and actually have communion with him in grace and in glory.

(*d*) To this, let it be added as distinctly taught in immediate connection with the summary we are considering, and as expletive of it, that we were called of God unto this fellowship of his

[1] Rom., ii. 7. [2] Rom., v. 21. [3] Rom., vi. 23.
[4] 1 Peter, i. 3–5. [5] 1 Cor., i. 30.

Son Jesus Christ our Lord :[1] that to those thus called of God, Christ crucified is the power of God and the wisdom :[2] that the grace of God which is given them by Jesus Christ, enriches them in every thing :[3] and that waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, he will confirm them unto the end, that they may be blameless in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ.[4]

(*e*) That God, in this whole procedure of his grace, chose and called his saints in contemplation of their being foolish things of the world, chosen to confound the wise : weak things of the world, chosen to confound the mighty; base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are.[5]

(*f*) And, finally, we are plainly told, that it was in the wisdom of God that the world by wisdom knew not God, and that it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe:[6] that this very preaching of the cross which is the power of God to them which are saved, is to them that perish foolishness :[7] and that the whole procedure of God in the choosing, calling, and saving his saints, was precisely and eternally designed to stop all flesh from glorying in his presence, and to cause that all that gloried should glory in the Lord :[8] every thing being the result of that favour which God shows towards us, and of those gifts which he bestows upon us, which are the two chief senses of the phrase, *The Grace of God.*

III.—1. The immediate effect upon us of the application to us of the benefits secured for us by the Covenant of Redemption, and of the bestowment upon us of the first fruits thereof; is, as has been already intimated, our Union and Communion with the Mediator of that Covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ. And what immediately results from that, is our Communion with all saints —which is the first benefit stated in the Apostles' Creed ; the truth of which I have before shown, and the full exposition of which will occupy us hereafter. United to our covenant Head by faith, our persons are beloved, and our services are accepted in him, and we receive all grace and all good from him.[9] And united to all saints by love, we have a participation in all that distinguishes them and us, as partakers of one common salvation.

[1] 1 Cor., i. 8. [2] 1 Cor., i. 24. [3] 1 Cor., i. 4. [4] 1 Cor., i. 7, 8.
[5] 1 Cor., i. 27, 28. [6] 1 Cor., i. 21. [7] 1 Cor., i. 18. [8] 1 Cor., i. 29–31.
[9] John, i. 16, 17; Eph., ii. 4–13.

2. In the contemplation of God, as I have shown fully in a previous chapter, the Covenant of Redemption in its most fundamental sense, had relation to the elect of God ; and each person of the Godhead stood related therein to the special work he would perform—the special part he would take in their salvation. This is so emphatic concerning the Son, who, besides being a party to that covenant, became the Mediator of it between God and men; that all the redeemed became parties in interest to it as represented by him, who as their covenant head engaged for their redemption and received them as his : and they became actually his in their regeneration in a personal covenant with him. That body of which Christ is the head is mystical, that is it is both real and spiritual, and is made up of elect sinners, redeemed by him, and all united to him by faith, and to each other by love ; as I have before said. Innumerable statements of the Scriptures relate to this universal and invisible Church of Christ, and to his relation to it as Lord, and Ruler, and Redeemer, and Head, and Husband, and all in all : and one whole Book (Canticles) is devoted to the elucidation, by means of the most sacred and intimate of all human relations, of the ties between the Saviour and his elect Bride. The union of this whole body, and of every member of it, with the person of Christ, is a mystical union, that is a real and spiritual one ; and the manner of its occurrence is also mystical, but yet real and spiritual ; so that the body itself, and its union with Christ, and the manner in which that union is effected, are all of one and the same nature. There is nothing metaphorical in the case, much less any thing imaginary: neither is there any thing physical or corporal. But nevertheless it is real, regard being had to the things united: for while the Apostle admits it to be a great mystery, he asserts the fact that our nature, soul, and body, are united to the soul and body of Christ, for we are declared to be members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones :[1] nay, in a certain sense, the church is the very body of Christ, and each saint a particular member of that body :[2] and they are all made partakers of the divine nature.[3] When we have regard, on the other hand, to the means whereby the mystery of this union is wrought, they are all spiritual means, and will be pointed out directly. And so the union between Christ and the believer, which immediately results from the ap-

[1] Eph., v. 29–32. [2] 1 Cor., xii. 27. [3] 2 Peter, i. 4.

plication to us of the benefits of Redemption, is a union at once real and spiritual; and is, therefore, properly called mystical.

3. This union with Christ involves immediate and boundless results; and that so fundamentally, that we cannot conceive properly of its occurrence, without conceiving of those matters thus indispensably connected with it. For example,

(*a*) In this act, God gives Christ to us to be our Saviour; thus accomplishing the very purpose of his free and special love. For, said Christ, God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.[1] And so Christ said again, I have manifested thy name to the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.[2]

(*b*) In this act, also, God gives us to Christ, to be his people, and to be saved by him; thus accomplishing the most fundamental stipulation of the Covenant of Grace, and the unalterable purpose of God to have a seed to serve him. For it is written, that both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.[3] And Christ has explicitly told us, that he is entirely and exclusively the Master of all who are united to him.[4]

(*c*) It was in contemplation of this very union between Christ and all believers that the method of the grace of God by way of the Incarnation of the Son, became the way of salvation for fallen men: and in full view thereof, that the Son covenanted to redeem us, and to receive us as his, thus united to him. For in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren.[5] And forasmuch as the children which God had given him, are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.[6] And so he consented to become Immanuel, which is, God with us, and to be called Jesus, which is, Saviour.[7]

[1] John, iii. 16. [2] John, xvii. 6. [3] Heb., i. 11–13. [4] Matt., xxiii. 8–10.
[5] Heb., i. 17. [6] Heb., ii. 14, 15. [7] Isa., vii. 14; Matt., i. 21–23.

(*d*) Our consent to this union with Christ, is the very foundation of our taking him to be our Lord—the very essence of our professing his name—the very expression of our taking his yoke upon us—the very proof of our divine call. For, said Christ, no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.[1] And the burden of the song of the Bride is, I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.[2] And his children express their delight in him by saying, I am the Lord's ; and by calling themselves after his name.[3] And the rest they find unto their souls, is by taking his yoke upon them, and learning of him.[4]

(*e*) It may be readily conceded—and is theoretically unquestionable, that even after all this, the sinner if left to himself would certainly apostatize from Christ, and perish : the grounds of which statement being numerous, and chiefly very obvious, need not be recapitulated here, out of their place—farther than to note the general fact, that however far the restoration of fallen man may proceed in this life, it is not perfected here. But we are to bear in mind that the union with Christ is an inseparable union ; that the act of God giving Christ to us, and the act giving us to Christ, are irrevocable, covenant acts ; that Christ has actually performed his part of the covenant, and the Father, and the Holy Ghost, have commenced the performance of theirs, and gone a great length therein—all which has been proved : and then, it appears to me, that the whole grounds of the theoretical possibility, much less certainty of the perdition of a soul once united to Christ, vanish at once. Now let us add, point by point, that the love of God is everlasting, and the love of Christ unchangeable :[5] that the Covenant of Redemption is an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure :[6] that Christ's intercession for his people is continual and effectual :[7] that the divine seed and Spirit of God abide in every one that is born of God :[8] that they have the explicit promise that they shall not depart from him, and the distinct assurance of Christ that they shall never perish :[9] and finally that there is an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those whom God hath begotten again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto which they are

[1] John, vi. 65. [2] Song of Sol., ii. 16; vi. 3; vii. 10. [3] Isa., xliv. 5.
[4] Matt., xi. 20. [5] Jer., xxxi. 3; John, xiii. 1.
[6] Heb., xiii. 20, 21; Isa., liv. 10. [7] Heb., vii. 25.
[8] 1 John, iii. 9—ii. 27. [9] Jer., xxxii. 40; John, x. 28.

kept by the mighty power through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.[1] If any one of these numerous and conclusive truths is worthy of human acceptation, then there can be no doubt as to the destiny of those whom the Apostle Peter characterizes as elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.[2] But seeing that every one of these truths is distinctly revealed by God, and that their reiteration is incessant throughout the Scriptures ; I can no more conceive how we are to discredit the sublime result which they all establish, than I can conceive how man could obtain any advantage, or God gain any glory, by discrediting that result. Why should not God save his elect ?

4. I have already said that all the means whereby our union with Christ is wrought, are spiritual means : and I had before shown that the union itself was the immediate result of the application to us of the benefits secured to us by the Covenant of Redemption : from whence it follows, as has already been shown in another way, that the benefits of the Covenant of Redemption are applied to us by spiritual means. Proceeding now to point out those means, it is striking to observe how, in the very nature of the case, as well as in the very nature of man, there lies an absolute impossibility of the truth of the doctrine of sacramental grace, *ex opere operato*, upon which every system of will-worship, and formalism, from the highest Romanism downward, fundamentally rests.

(*a*) The spiritual means whereby the benefits of the Covenant of Redemption are applied to us, and from whose application to us, the effect is our union with Christ ; may be contemplated in a twofold aspect. On the part of Christ, it is his Spirit which makes the oracles, the ordinances, and the ministry which God has established, effectual in gathering and perfecting his saints.[3] This is the especial work of the Holy Ghost.[4] And this union of the believer with Christ is the work of God's special grace, by the Holy Ghost, wrought in our effectual calling.[5] It is by the Spirit given to us, and abiding in us, that we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us.[6] If the Spirit of God dwell in us, we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit : but if any man have not the

[1] 1 Pet. i. 1–5. [2] 1 Pet., i. 2. [3] Eph, iv. 11–13 ; Isa., lix. 21.
[4] Titus, iii. 5, 6. [5] Eph., i. 18–20 ; ii. 6–8 ; 1 Cor., vi. 17. [6] 1 John, iii. 24—iv. 13.

Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.[1] This Spirit is bestowed on every believer, and resides and powerfully works in all of them, shedding abroad the love of God in their hearts.[2] It is in Christ, that he is the Spirit of life unto them :[3] and it is by him that they are inseparably united to Christ.[4]

(*b*) On our part, the sole means of union with Christ, is Faith in him : for by grace are we saved through faith : and that not of ourselves ; it is the gift of God.[5] It is at once the first saving effect, and the most general instrument within the soul, of the Spirit of Christ disposing and enabling us to embrace him and cleave to him.[6] It is by faith in Christ, that we receive from God through Christ, every covenant blessing and benefit :[7] and it is by faith in Christ, that we render back to God through Christ, all holy and thankful obedience.[8]

(*c*) Well may we say, therefore, that Faith is a saving grace whereby we receive and rest upon Jesus Christ alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the Gospel. Nor does it seem to be possible for a candid mind to avoid perceiving, that by such means as these, supposing them to be real, a perfectly simple, spiritual, and efficacious way is pointed out to us by God, whereby a mystical and inseparable union is established between the person of Christ and the soul of the believer. Nor to avoid seeing that this is accomplished by the Holy Ghost applying to the soul of the believer, the benefits secured to him by the Covenant of Redemption. It remains to point out, very briefly, the nature and effects of that communion with Christ, which results from our union with him.

IV.—1. The infinite goodness of God's nature, is the farthest point to which we can penetrate in such enquiries as these. One form in which divine goodness finds expression, is in the free and eternal Love of God ; and that Love is made effectual, towards its objects, in the special and efficacious grace of God. That grace expresses itself in the whole work of the Mediator of the Covenant of Redemption : and it expresses itself again in the whole work of the Holy Ghost, founded upon that whole work of the Saviour. The general manner of this work of the Spirit is to apply to the objects of God's Love, the benefits of Christ's

[1] Rom., viii. 9.
[2] 1 Cor., iii. 16; Rom., v. 5.
[3] Rom., viii. 2.
[4] 1 Cor., xii. 13; Eph., ii. 18–20; iv. 4.
[5] Eph., ii. 8.
[6] 2 Cor., iv. 13; Gal., v. 5; Eph., iii. 16–21.
[7] Rom., v. 1, 2.
[8] Col., ii. 7; Gal., v. 6.

Redemption; the effect of that is our union and communion with Christ; and the effect of our union with Christ, and the manner of its production, have just been explicated in a general way. Thus united to Christ, through his Spirit, by a living Faith, as new creatures, we have that Fellowship with him, of which the Scriptures speak so decisively, and to which they constantly allude. It is God who is infinitely faithful, by whom we are called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.[1] It is declared to be that fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God; but which it is one special object of preaching among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, to make all men see; to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.[2] And so it is set before us as the fellowship of the Spirit;[3] the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ;[4] the fellowship of the saints with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.[5]

2. This divine fellowship, therefore, is that communion with Christ, whereby we participate with him in all the benefits flowing from the execution of all his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, as Mediator of the Covenant of Grace. Being one with him, we are invested with the right to all that is his; are put in partial possession of it in this life—and will receive the full fruition of it in a higher state of existence.[6] The Lord Christ being made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; we are so in him that we participate of his wisdom, his righteousness, his sanctification, and his redemption.[7] So that we can assert no less, than that we have communion with Christ in Grace, and in Glory.[8]

3. United to Christ in our Effectual Calling, and therein born again of the Spirit and from above; our communion with Christ in Grace, therefore, is the participation with him in all the benefits of his Redemption, which specially appertain to this life. The chief of these, besides our Effectual Calling, and our Regeneration, just alluded to, are our Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification; together with all the benefits which, in this

[1] 1 Cor., i. 9.
[2] Eph., iii. 8–11.
[3] Phil., ii. 1.
[4] Phil., iii. 10.
[5] 1 John, i. 3.
[6] Col., ii. 10; Rev., ii. 28.
[7] 1 Cor., i. 30.
[8] John, xvii. 21–24.

life, accompany or flow from them ; the whole of which have a peculiar relation to saving Faith and Repentance unto life, as I have explained in part in another place, and will explain further hereafter.

4. But there is also communion with Christ in Glory, as well as in Grace. In this life they who are united to Christ may participate with him in the first fruits of his glory. At the separation of their souls from their sinful bodies, at death, they will have complete participation in glory with Christ. At the Resurrection and final Judgment, their reunited souls and bodies will advance in an inscrutable participation in glory with Christ. And, it may be permitted to add, somewhat further above all comprehension now, is intimated as their final portion and estate, when the Mediatorial Kingdom, in its perfect glory, shall be delivered to the Father on the Lamb's Book of Life.

5. It is to the particular matters which have now been stated very generally in their great relations to each other, to Christ, and to us ; that our attention is to be directed in a special manner. What we ought to desire above all, is to understand with perfect clearness this mighty working of God within us ; to realize in our own souls every step of this progress as it is developed, from our utter impotence in sin and misery, through divine grace, to glory beyond utterance. At every step, every error is capable of immediate detection ; for I appeal exclusively to the word of God, and confess my ignorance as soon as that is silent. It is to the conscious experience of each particular soul, that I continually address myself, from the depths of a soul that has passed along all the way it attempts to disclose ; except that it perceives there is a height it has not reached, and sighs for the sublime fruition of it. There are millions which cannot be numbered, who have found victory and peace, through union and communion with the Saviour of sinners. No one ever found victory or peace by rejecting him. How that mystical union and communion are to be established between that Saviour and our souls, is more distinctly explained to us by God, than any truth relatively a thousandth part as important to any other science, ever was explained. And the power through which we realize these things, even the power of God, does not admit of being reduced to a comparison with all other powers combined. How then are we to account for its apparent inefficacy ? Therein lies

one of those overwhelming demonstrations, which are so deeply imbedded in the very structure of the Gospel. The very first articulate utterance of salvation was coupled with the dreadful sentence—I will put enmity between *thy* seed and *her* seed: and the very last closed with the not less dreadful sentence—God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book.[1] The shortcoming of man and the special grace of God united—mean life: severed—the result is death. We forget that we are condemned already—and that the whole question is, of the possibility of deliverance, while we await the final sentence.

[1] Gen., iii. 15; Rev., xxii. 19.

CHAPTER VII.

EFFECTUAL CALLING: WITH THE MANNER OF ITS OCCURRENCE.

I. 1. Effeetual Calling: its Significanee, and Relations.—2. Nature of the Diffieulties whieh embarrass its Treatment.—3. Our Natural Ability to Good: wholly nugatory for Salvation.—4. Free Will: its Nature and Limitation in all Beings.—5. The Free Will of Adam, before his Fall: of all men since the Fall: utterly impotent to our Reeovery.—II. 1. The Gospel Call, and its Result, with Natural Ability and Free Will to help.—2. The Work of the Divine Spirit, in our Effeetual Calling. —3. Its Reeognition, in its Divine Work, of Man's aetual Condition: Terms of the Problem.—4. Detailed Statement:—(*a*) A Work of Infinite Grace and Almighty Power:—(*b*) Caused by God's free and speeial Love:—(*c*) Relation of the Father and the Son, to the Method of our Effeetual Calling:—(*d*) Ageney of the Holy Ghost: —(*e*) Means used by him:—(*f*) Effeets upon our Understanding:—(*g*) Upon our Will:—(*h*) Upon our Heart:—(*i*) Upon our Conseience:—(*j*) Result upon our present, and endless State:—(*k*) Effeetual Calling thus considered.—III. 1. A seeond Analysis from the point of view thus reached.—2. Demonstration that the Root and Substanee of our Effeetual Calling are Divine and Graeious.—3. Detailed Statement of what is required of us.—4. Relations of Natural and Regenerate States of the Soul to eaeh other: Obligations resulting therefrom.—5. Ineffieaey of our Endeavours: Detail of the Spirit's Work within us.—6. Effieaey of this Divine Work—without Violenee to our Nature.

I.—1. MAN, in the state in which he was created, a personal spirit in the image of God, bore the divine likeness both in that the faculties of the soul were shadows of divine attributes, and in that the tendencies of his soul were towards all that God approved. The one God manifests himself to us in as many aspects and ways as our limited nature can comprehend ; and we express our sense of God himself considered in these ways and aspects, by ascribing such and such Attributes to him ; as, intellect, will, power, and the like. And to aid our weakness still further, we put into classes such of these Attributes as appear to us to be analogous to each other, or to be founded on some clear distinction ; as Primary, Essential, and the like. In like manner, if we would consider this finite image of God, our own spirit, in its absolute oneness and simplicity; and consider all its faculties as only so many manifestations of its own essence ; and

then classify those faculties according to the analogies and distinctions which we observe amongst them : we would have the word of God on one side, and our own consciousness on the other, and the divine nature before our face, in building up to perfection the true science of our own being. At the first step we observe how such a being must perceive in God the sum of all truth and all goodness, and must cleave to him with all the fervour of its pure nature. At the next step we perceive the peril of such a being from the fallibility which is inherent in its very nature as created—as dependent, and as finite. And at the third step we perceive, that having fallen, its posture with reference to God is wholly changed ; and that in proportion as it has, by that fall, lost the image of God, so will it cease to cleave unto God, or become indifferent to God, or become wholly averse to God. And at the fourth step we perceive that the divine restoration, through grace, of this fallen creature now wholly averse to God, must needs be the result, not of its spontaneous endeavours after God, but of God's supernatural working upon it. It is this wonderful working whereby men are called from a state of sin to a gracious and glorious communion with God, which I intend by the phrase, *Effectual Calling*. For above all other distinctions in the human race, the most effectual one is that which separates it into those who love God, and those who do not : and of the former we are plainly told that all things work together for their good. And then it is added, that their love for God is the result of their having been called according to his purpose ; a calling directly connected, on one hand, with their predestination to be conformed to the image of his Son, and, on the other hand, with their own justification and glorification. Results—like all others involved in divine grace—which flow from the utter impossibility of separating the elect of God, from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.[1]

2. If every member of the human family was to be restored to God and saved, the treatment of a question of this sort would be extremely brief and simple ; if indeed, in that case, all treatment of it was not useless. Or if those who will be saved and those who will be lost, were totally separated from each other here on earth, or were capable of being unmistakeably distinguished from each other while all are living together in sin; such

[1] Rom., viii. 28–39.

an aspect might easily be given to the subject, as would silence the ordinary cavils of impenitent men. Whatever real difficulties embarrass the subject, arise not from the nature of this, or any other special truth; but from the absolute nature of the case, in applying the saving grace of God to the mixed and probationary condition of fallen men, in such a manner as to prevent that grace from being absolutely fruitless on one side, and from seeming to our weak faculties to be merely capricious on the other. And these difficulties are augmented by our proneness to treat with tenderness, if not with a kind of reverence, cavils which we accept as honest doubts of sincere enquirers, for whose satisfaction we would allay the mystery of godliness; while God in his blessed word constantly repels them as mere refuges of lies, fatal to the souls of men, and insulting to the majesty of God. God never permits us to forget that the real posture of the question is such, that nothing but sovereign and special grace can do us any good. Nay, if we were to judge of ourselves merely by the manner in which we have treated this very aspect of it, namely, God's calls to us to repent and believe the Gospel; we could say no less than that we must be lost, without some most effectual interposition of God. And this is merely admitting that to be true of our own soul, which the Scriptures teach us is true of every soul; a truth without which no soul can be saved at all. It is the efficacy of that truth which I desire to exhibit now.

3. We possess, even in our fallen state, ability to perceive and to conform to those natural and temporal obligations, which we owe as natural and moral creatures to ourselves and others:[1] and the right discharge of duties of that description, draws after it the greatest natural and temporal blessings—as the right understanding of them involves some of the most important parts of human knowledge. I have constantly asserted the enduring force of that natural morality which appertains to our very nature as moral beings, until we are finally sentenced and shut up in hell; and to the irrevocable permanence of all those great principles and truths, which belonged to our primeval condition as really as our very essence did. It is the culture, the love, and the practice of these things, which are the chief ornament and glory of man considered merely as a creature of God: and the

[1] Rom., ii. 13–15.

height to which he can still rise thereby, is the noblest monument and proof of the sublime estate he once enjoyed. But the moment we pass out of natural and temporal things—the moment we enter the domain of unseen, spiritual, and eternal things—then such knowledge as nature and reason afford us as the ground of religious duty, is wholly insufficient; and all the resources of nature and reason are wholly nugatory. We have passed into a region above our strength as depraved creatures: we are seeking, as sinners, to know and to do, what was once possible to us as creatures in a higher estate—but never was possible to us as sinful creatures in any estate at all. If we never come to the knowlege of the Saviour of sinners and the obligations of Revealed Religion, we never come to the bare possibility of being saved: because as mere creatures there is no longer a conceivable way of being saved, for us; and the only way possible for us as sinful creatures, is unknown to us. And a step farther, after we have come to the mere knowledge of the Saviour, and of the obligations of Revealed Religion, and the conditions of salvation for us as sinners; we find at every endeavour that something far beyond this is needful; for our carnal mind is not only enmity against God, but it is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be.[1] These are not conjectures: they are ultimate truths. We speak of a divine and effectual call to salvation; and we begin by rendering salvation impossible without the revealed knowledge of Jesus Christ: and impossible with that knowledge, merely of itself. Ultimate truths, I repeat: asserted ten thousand times in the word of God, attested by the universal experience of the human race, and perfectly explicable at the bar of reason and conscience.

4. In such a case as this, it is idle to talk about free will. The free will of the fallen angels did not keep them in heaven; nor has it ever brought one of them out of hell. The free will of Adam did not prevent him from losing his estate of perfection—nor has a single one of his countless descendants gained a solitary point towards the recovery of that estate, by means of his free will. Nor is there a being in the universe who—if he knew what was meant—would believe a devil or a sinner, if he should say he had changed his nature by an act of his will; any more than he would believe an Ethiopian who should say he had

[1] Rom., viii. 7.

made himself white by an act of his will. Now if any one sees fit to assert that if this be so, moral freedom is at an end, and sin and holiness, and reward and punishment are idle words; which in effect is continually asserted; the answer is precise and decisive. First, as to the fact—the cavil is merely absurd. For every human being has in his own consciousness, the proof and conviction of both facts which are alleged to be contradictory, namely, his moral freedom and his moral impotence: and the universe is full of one overwhelming demonstration, that its moral ruler is the author of both these convictions and facts in the soul of every sinner of the human race. And secondly, as to the theory—the cavil is purely idle and self-contradictory. For no being exists, or can be conceived to exist, with any such free will as the theory supposes. It is impious to imagine that God's Free Will is competent to counsel, or determine, or decree, or execute, or design, any thing contrary to the sum of his own perfections. It is absurd to say that Satan has any freedom of will to any thing good. It is inconceivable that any will in any being, any more than any other faculty, or attribute, or power, should be of that kind, that it will not enter into the sum of all the forces which make up the particular nature, of which it is a portion; and that it refuses to incur whatever is inherent in the essence of the nature, of which it is one element.

5. Man, therefore, when he was perfect but fallible, possessed a form of free will answerable to that peculiar form of moral existence; and was competent, it may be possible and is commonly alleged, to direct spontaneously his free actions, to good or evil; subject, however, if strictly tried, to the certainty of final lapse; and subject, moreover, to the perpetual necessity of special divine aid, founded in the intimate nature of every dependent existence; both of which conditions I have discussed elsewhere. But the will of the unfallen man, like every other will, in every being, was one of the attributes, faculties, powers of the essence; and as such, was necessarily affected by them, and in turn necessarily affected them. There was but one Adam, and he had but one nature, but one person, no matter in how many aspects he may present himself. His will, therefore, was subject to the control of his intellect and reason, enlightened by knowledge, guided by conscience, agitated by passions, determined by motives; its very freedom, perfect of its kind, but yet restricted and limited

after its kind, that is by the essence of the nature to which it appertained. Now if this essence changes, the will must change too ; because, otherwise, the will is not of the essence, and in that case man would have no will ; and, therefore, to say that the will of man is not depraved by the fall, as is constantly said, is the same as saying, either that man has no nature independent of mere acts, or that his nature is not depraved. But if we have no nature independently of our acts, it is more silly to talk about saving a soul, than to talk about saving an idea ; and if our nature is not depraved, salvation from sin is mere folly when proposed to such as have no sin. In his fallen state, therefore, man possesses his original nature, but in a form fatally changed : for its essence is depraved, and by consequence, all its attributes, powers, and faculties are depraved. He still has a will, and that will still has freedom : but it is a will utterly depraved—and a freedom which attaches to and is limited by the will thus depraved. His free will is subject to the conditions belonging to all the other powers of his nature ; subject to the influence of all those powers upon it ; and subject to the absolute condition of the essence of the nature. Every thing is depraved together —essence, nature, faculties, will, freedom, all are depraved : for all make up one personal spirit, and he is depraved : or if he is not, he certainly has no need of a Saviour, and such enquiries as these are frivolous. But it is perfectly obvious that any such free will as any sinner can possess, is utterly incompetent to that evangelical obedience which the Gospel demands ; utterly incompetent to the working of any such change in our nature as the Gospel exacts. Nor does the Gospel hesitate to assert, and urge upon us as one of the most fundamental truths involved in the very obedience which it demands, and the very change of nature which it exacts ; our utter depravity, and by consequence, our utter natural impotence to all that is evangelically good. The virtue and the vice which philosophy contemplates, are in their nature, their motive, their sanction, and their result, immeasurably lower than the virtue and the vice which Revealed Religion contemplates. And Philosophy herself can plainly see, that supernatural knowledge, directed to supernatural results, must provide a supernatural agency and supernatural means, to work in as well as to work for a fallen nature, of which the fundamental necessity is its own new creation.[1]

[1] John, iii. 1–21.

II.—1. The word of God, in perfect recognition of the original adaptedness of human nature to the service and enjoyment of God, and of its present susceptibility in its fallen condition, to be restored to the lost image of God ; furnishes in the divine Revelation it contains, the perfect knowledge of the divine method of the restoration of man. This knowledge comes to us in such a manner, namely, by the word of God, as to give to its absolute truth the highest certainty of which truth is capable : and it comes to us with that infinite authority of God, which invests it with an uncontrollable majesty and efficacy. The will of God is made known to us : that will which—whether as creatures dependent on the Creator, or as sinners dependent on the Saviour, it is the first necessity, the first interest, the first duty of man to obey. In the whole revealed will of God, nothing is more distinctly stated, than that God is not willing that any should perish, but is willing that all should come to repentance ; and he appeals to his own long-suffering for proof of what he says.[1] Nay, seeing that he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained ; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead : he has added the weight of his infinite authority to the plea of his boundless mercy, and now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.[2] He assures us that these holy Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.[3] He declares to us, that this Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.[4] By prophets and by apostles alike, he has proclaimed to every generation of men, Behold now is the accepted time: Behold now is the day of salvation.[5] And by Prophets and by Apostles alike, the fundamental principle of the divine administration of grace, has been loudly and continually asserted to be, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.[6] And now what is the result of all this proclamation of divine mercy—all this gospel call to men, through all ages ? Let us trace the whole career of grace from Adam's day to our own—and see if we can discern one single clear instance in which, throughout all generations, one single sinner embraced this gospel call, in his own strength,

[1] 2 Pet., iii. 9. [2] Acts, xvii. 30, 31. [3] 2 Tim., iii. 15. [4] Rom., i. 16.
[5] Isa., xlix. 8; 2 Cor., vi. 2. [6] Joel, ii. 32; Acts, ii. 21; Rom., x. 13.

and without God's special grace added to the gospel call. Alas! no. All our natural ability, upon which we are so prone to rely; all our boasted free will, about which we are so sensitive; yea, all divine knowledge merely as such: however real may be our possession of these inestimable gifts of God—however great may be the obligation resting on us to bless God for them, and to use them all aright—however they may all enter and be taken for granted in our Effectual Calling: beyond a doubt neither of them, nor yet all of them, can deliver us from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Shall God, then, be robbed of the glory of his grace? Shall his elect be left to perish? Or will our stupid and perverse hearts consent that God may make one more effort?

2. I have stated that Philosophy herself could plainly see, that in a case like this, supernatural agency and means were as necessary to be added to natural knowledge, as that was to be added to our natural ability. And it has been clearly and repeatedly shown that the Scriptures revealed to us an Infinite Agent as the author of the whole work of restoration in us; and that they disclose both the means and the manner of their use by this divine Agent, and the nature of their effects on us, when so used by him. This Infinite Agent, as has been repeatedly shown, is the Holy Ghost, the third Person in the adorable Trinity; whose special work it is to apply to us the benefits of the Redemption purchased by the blood of Christ. In a previous chapter I have endeavoured to explain what is meant by the common operations of the Spirit. Besides those there are other operations of a peculiar kind which the Scriptures ascribe to the Spirit. He is represented to be author of much that we habitually ascribe to the natural endowments of men. A few out of innumerable examples are, the inconceivable strength and dauntless courage bestowed on Samson:[1] the exceeding skill in the arts given to Bezaleel:[2] and the high capacity for government with which Saul was temporarily replenished.[3] Moreover, he is the author of those wonderful gifts which the Scriptures call *spiritual*, alike from their own nature, and from their peculiar susceptibility of being made means of edification in divine things; but which, though ordinarily bestowed only on saints, seem nevertheless to have been bestowed even on reprobates. Amongst

[1] Judges, xiv. 6. [2] Exod., xxxi. 3. [3] 1 Sam., xi. 6.

these the power of healing, of tongues, of prophesying, and of miracles, are to be classed; concerning which, let them exist where they may, there can be no doubt of their being gifts of the Holy Ghost.[1] But the saving work of the Holy Ghost is different from all the foregoing operations; and is that true, holy, quickening, and by consequence perpetual and effectual operation of his, whereby the vital influence of saving grace, from Christ the head, is communicated to every member of Christ's mystical body.[2] In this sense the world neither knows nor receives the Spirit of truth: but the children of God know him, for he dwells with and in them.[3] For grace and peace are multiplied unto all who are elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.[4] And now, as in the preceding instance, let us search diligently and see if we can find, from the beginning of time until now, a solitary case of clear restoration to God, produced otherwise than by the Effectual Call of the Holy Ghost: or a solitary case of continued alienation from God, under that divine and life-giving call. We may indeed pronounce the whole matter absurd; declare it to be impossible in itself and dishonouring to God; and revile all earnest Christians as hypocritical, self-deceived, or fanatical. This is done continually, and has been done always: nor will I stop to urge how remarkable a confirmation of this glorious part of God's dealings with men, is afforded by this fatal judgment of them that are lost, that the power of God unto salvation is foolishness, or worse.[5] What I urge is, that according to all the knowledge in possession of the human race, the soul of every human being is risked for eternity, upon the reality or the fallacy of the matter here put in issue: and therefore it surely becomes every one to be thoroughly persuaded in his own mind.

3. Our nature, though depraved, is still the same nature that was originally bestowed on man—the same that in its renewed state is united to Christ—the same that in its glorified estate will be perfectly blessed in the full fruition of God forever. Duty, and the inward sense of it, as really appertain to man in his fallen, and in his renewed, as in his primeval state; and every

[1] 1 Cor., xii. 1, 4, 31; xiv. 1, 37. [2] John, vi. 51, 57, 63. [3] John, xiv. 17.
[4] 1 Pet., i. 2. [5] 1 Cor., i. 18.

attribute, power, and faculty which must exist before we can predicate those things of man, also still appertain to his nature. In passing from an estate of sin and misery into an estate of union and communion with Christ, and thereby of salvation ; the actual condition of the nature thus changed must be taken fully into account, in whatever special and supernatural aid may be bestowed on man, and in whatever supernatural work may be wrought in him. His conscience, his understanding, and his will, are absolutely such in his fallen state, as his fallen nature is ; and the divine grace which would deal with that fallen nature, must deal with these fundamental elements of it, in complete recognition of their own depraved condition. And thus in all the process of our restoration to God through our Effectual Calling by the Holy Ghost, these two things are to be perpetually considered ; namely, the effectual work of divine grace, and the peculiar condition of our fallen nature. The Holy Ghost, and fallen man, and the divine vocation which one gives and the other receives : a state of sin and misery, and a state of restoration to God through Christ, and the transition from the former to the latter state : these are the elements of this great problem. To a true spiritual insight, long familiar with divine things, and long observant of the movement of our inner life, these are simple, elemental truths. As such, our divine Redeemer taught them to Nicodemus.[1] Yet that simple-hearted enquirer after truth, though he was a ruler amongst God's ancient people, and after the straitest sect of their religion ; marvelled as he heard them. And we, in estimating so great a matter in the double aspect which it constantly presents, ought to remember that it is at the feet of Jesus that all satisfying knowledge is to be obtained. For the main embarrassments arise, not merely from any separate view either of God or of ourself, but from the relation between the two. So if we virtually exclude Jesus, the chief term in any possible solution, how are we to obtain satisfying knowledge of the way of life, and how are we to walk in it ; when he is omitted who is himself, the way, the truth, and the life ?[2]

4. Whoever will attentively consider what has been advanced, and the grounds upon which the conclusions reached are based, will probably agree that the whole subject is capable of being stated in a simple, precise, and perfectly intelligible way. If so,

[1] John, iii. 12. [2] John, xiv. 6.

then we can see clearly, and certainly, what this great and effectual call of God is; what are the effects which it produces, the means by which those effects are brought about, and the manner in which they occur and are manifested. It is this which I will now attempt.

(*a*) Effectual Calling is a work of God's infinite grace, executed by his Almighty power. It is more than a divine *act;* it is a continued series of divine operations, and therefore may well be called a divine work. We are wholly unable to imagine any reason for its performance, which does not involve the grace of God as its chief element: nor is there known to man any power competent to its execution but the Almighty power of God. And all this, which seems to human reason to be inevitable, is precisely asserted in the word of God.[1]

(*b*) The moving and original cause of our personal salvation, and so of our effectual calling of God, is not at all nor in any degree, any thing in us:[2] but is the free and especial love of God for his elect:[3] according to his eternal purpose and grace in Jesus Christ.[4]

(*c*) The method of doing this is, that we are divinely brought to the Father through Jesus Christ, through whom alone is there any access to the Father:[5] and learning of the Father, we come to Christ, effectually drawn unto him by the Father:[6] and so we are reconciled to God, through Jesus Christ.[7]

(*d*) In all this, the sole efficient Agent is the Holy Ghost, the third Person in the adorable Trinity; by whom we come to the Father through the Son, and by whom we are drawn to the Son by the Father: the salvation to which God has from the beginning chosen us, being made ours through the sanctification of the Spirit, and the belief of the truth—of which truth the Spirit is the author.[8]

(*e*) The means used by the Spirit, are all such as man is capable of being influenced by, for good: but especially the providence of God, the ordinances of God, and very particularly the word of God, whereby we are called to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.[9]

(*f*) In this divine work of our Effectual Calling, our mind is

[1] Eph., i. 18–20; 1 Thess., i. 8, 9. [2] Titus, iii. 3–6. [3] Eph., ii. 4–10.
[4] 2 Tim., ii. 9, 10; Acts, xiii. 48. [5] John, xiv. 6. [6] John, vi. 44, 45.
[7] 2 Cor., v. 20. [8] 2 Thess., ii. 13; 2 Cor., iii. 3, 6. [9] 2 Thess., ii. 14; John, vi. 63.

spiritually and savingly enlightened ; our eyes being opened, and we being turned from darkness to light, and from Satan unto God, receiving the forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ.[1]

(*g*) In like manner our will is renewed, and determined by God's Almighty power to that which is good ; so that we most freely and joyfully embrace Christ as he is offered to us in the Gospel ; God working in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.[2]

(*h*) A new heart is given to us and a new spirit is put within us by God : and he takes away the stony heart out of our flesh, and gives us a heart of flesh :[3] for it is with the heart that man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.[4]

(*i*) The conscience is awakened, quickened, enlightened, and sanctified ; and we are made able and willing to answer the divine call, and to accept and embrace the grace offered and conveyed through Jesus Christ.[5]

(*j*) As the result, fallen men are completely extricated from their natural estate of sin and misery, are translated into an estate of grace and salvation, are led on from one degree of grace and strength to another, are kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation, and finally receive the end of their faith in the salvation of their souls.[6]

(*k*) Contemplating our Effectual Calling in this manner, we behold its nature and its progress, as an infinite reality divinely and graciously wrought out upon and within our fallen nature, according to its actual condition, powers and susceptibility. In this general survey is involved implicitly or explicitly the greater part, perhaps the whole of the knowledge of God unto salvation. Amongst other things directly involved, and not sufficiently developed in a mere outline, are those immense topics commonly expressed by the words, Regeneration, Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification ; the discussion of which will follow in their order.

III.—1. If we will reflect on the successive propositions which have just been stated—every one of which seem to be

[1] Acts, xxvi. 18 ; 1 Cor., ii. 10, 11.
[2] Phil., ii. 13 ; Deut., xxx. 6.
[3] Ezekiel, xxxvi. 26.
[4] Rom., x. 10.
[5] Rom., viii. 2 ; Eph., ii. 1–7.
[6] 1 Peter, i. 1–9 ; Eph., ii. *passim*.

sustained by the express testimony of God, and the whole united to form a perfectly coherent system ; we shall perceive not only, that the whole way of our salvation subjectively considered, is set before us, as I have already intimated ; but that various acts on the part of man, many others on the part of God, and not a few which imply both the efficiency of God and the concurrence of man, are plainly stated or necessarily suggested to us. Considered under this point of view, let us attempt another analysis of the immense subject.

2. Man in his fallen state could not possibly know, except by a divine Revelation, that God was willing to restore him to his favour. So far as he retained the knowledge, or the sense of his original estate, and so far as he had proofs of the goodness and mercy of God to him in his fallen estate ; he had grounds of hope, possibly of expectation, that God would pity and help him. But how it could be done—and what it would result in—if God had remained silent, far exceeded man's capacity even to conjecture. That it would occur by means of the incarnation and sacrifice of the Son of God ; and that its result would be the perfect blessedness of man, in the complete enjoyment of God to all eternity ; is incapable of belief except upon the authority of God himself—and even then only as the most stupendous miracle of divine love. And so deeply seated is all this, that even after all has been divinely exhibited to man, *unbelief* is the special form of his most complete rejection of God ; and at its foundation, that unbelief rests on our inward denial either of the ability or the willingness of Christ to save us. Lying thus in total darkness concerning divine grace, God is pleased to reveal his purposes of infinite mercy to us : lying in total helplessness, he is pleased to make those purposes efficacious towards us. What can we know or do, with our will, our understanding, our conscience all depraved—our whole nature in a condition at once sinful and miserable—alike ignorant and impotent concerning any restoration to God ? Most clearly, the whole foundation of every thing we can mean by a divine call to eternal life, lies wholly out of our reach ; completely beyond any control of ours. It rests merely and absolutely in the disposal of God. In its very root, it is divine and gracious : nor is there so much as a conceivable possibility that it could be otherwise.

3. Whatever may be the condition of fallen men considered

merely as creatures of God, it is manifest that it becomes their immediate duty to give diligent heed to the Saviour of sinners as soon as God is pleased to reveal him unto them. To this intent is that warning so often repeated in the Scriptures, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear; and that promise made in so many forms—Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.[1] And if the mercies thus pressed on us are withheld from others, this only increases our obligations to him who bestows them, and our guilt if we reject them. All our faculties ought to be devoted to whatever part of the call of God unto our souls, he is pleased to vouchsafe unto us; and our attention—which we are prone to avert from such subjects—ought to be fixed upon them with the deepest engagedness. And this conduct on our part, so clearly obligatory upon us, God has been pleased to intimate is a way whereby we may hope to excite right desires within us, and to preserve and augment the gifts of the Holy Ghost.[2] And thus there may arise within us, a conviction of the greatness of our sin and misery, and of the truth of all God's testimony: and the contemplation of all his works and dealings, of all his infinite goodness to us, and, above all, of his unspeakable grace and mercy in the salvation provided for us—may lead us to repentance.[3] Moreover, the earnest consideration of the judgments of God may serve to convict us, and fill us with anxiety concerning our state here, our latter end, and our everlasting condition.[4]

4. We can hardly fail to observe that, although no state of the unrenewed heart can be any inducement to God, in any proper sense, to do our souls good; yet, undoubtedly, there are certain states of heart which, in point of time, are proximate to conversion; and there are other states which, apparently, are never immediately followed by conversion. This is the lowest statement of these phenomena which can be made; and if the immediate object now was to discuss them, it would be necessary to make a much higher statement of them. Because there is a resemblance which may become extremely close, between certain states of the unrenewed heart, and certain analogous states of the renewed heart: and there are other states of the unrenewed

[1] Luke, viii. 8; Isa., lv. 3.
[2] Acts, xvi. 14; Luke, xxiv. 45.
[3] Ps. xix. 2–5; Acts, xxiv. 17; Rom., ii. 4.
[4] Acts, xxiv. 25.

heart, utterly remote from every thing found in the renewed heart. And theoretically, as well as practically, those states of the unrenewed heart which are proximate to conversion, are matters of the very highest interest. Considering man to have been created in the image of God—to be still susceptible of restoration to that lost image—to be actually restored to it in his Effectual Calling—and to be thus restored in a manner which recognizes and respects the actual condition of his nature ; it is not easy to see how the phenomena to which I have alluded could be otherwise, while it is easy to see in them, one of those immense confirmations of the way of life, which are scattered so thickly along its divine course. Beyond question, the efficacy of any outward means of grace addressed to a free, rational, and moral agent—must have relation to these very phenomena, and to their bearing upon our salvation; and so it is one of the three great Offices of Christ to be the Teacher of men. How diligently, then, ought all men endeavour to cultivate these states of soul which appear to have any tendency towards the greatest of all good ; and, in like manner, strive against those of an opposite character. How carefully should we avoid all that God has forbidden, and perform whatever he has required ; which, as to outward conduct and common duties, we have natural ability to do, under the dilgent use of the means of grace, especially when helped by the common operations of the divine Spirit. Confessing at every step the actual condition of our hearts, and the real state of our progress ; we should be above all careful that we do not harden our hearts, or resist or grieve the Holy Ghost ; above all, diligent in the use of the word of God which is the great means of our recovery.[1] To crown all, we should be instant and importunate in prayer to God, through Jesus Christ, for all that we need and desire—and especially for the Holy Ghost ; for salvation is impossible except by the agency of the Holy Ghost, and prayer is at once the very breath of the penitent soul, and the very means by which it is carried towards its new birth, and sustained in its new life. Six times has the Saviour asserted, in a few connected sentences, that our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.[2]

5. How little is there which man can do, that is not embraced

[1] Jer., xxiii. 29.

[2] Luke, xi. 9–13 ; Matt., vii. 7–12.

in the foregoing summary? Alas! how few are there who attempt so much! Yet how plain is it, that until the Spirit actually enters our hearts with his saving power, all that I have recounted, comes far short of our Effectual Calling. There is that which God alone can do: and he does it. His Spirit stands and knocks at the door of our heart: he arouses our conscience whose sanctification is the main remedial end of our calling: and begins in us, effectually, that great work whose fundamental expression is, that we do not choose God, but he chooses us.[1] And then we must have a divine illumination, whereby a supernatural conviction of the truth revealed by God is produced in the mind, and a spiritual insight and understanding of it is shed abroad in the soul.[2] Moreover, we must receive this truth in the love of it and in the power of it, with a living knowledge adequate, through the motives which attend it, to direct our actions according to the commandments of God. And, to crown all, we must have that inward desire and purpose to conform all our thoughts and actions to the truth of God, and to have our will swallowed up in the will of God, in the power of which we freely and joyfully come to Christ as our Saviour, and are united to him in our Effectual Calling. That all this, from beginning to end, is based on Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, and accompanied by Repentance toward God—both of which are fruits of the Spirit; need not be insisted on here, after what I said in a preceding chapter.

6. Impenitent men are apt to profess a total inability to understand how these operations of the Holy Ghost can occur, without doing practical violence to our nature and faculties; while the children of God who have actually incurred these divine operations, are apt to be insensible to purely theoretical difficulties, which they know to be illusive. And beyond a doubt, the case is wholly with God and his children. For arguing *à priori*, what can be theoretically more absurd, than to question the ability of God, who is the author of our nature and its faculties, to deal with us according to that nature and those faculties, by any means, to any end—the sole limitation being that a direct contradiction shall not be involved in the terms: since every thing else is within the competence of God, and is seen to be so by human reason? And arguing *à posteriori*, what can be

[1] Rom., iii. 20. [2] 2 Cor., iv. 6.

practically more absurd, than to deny on theoretical grounds the possibility of actual occurrences, which take place by the thousand, in the form denied to be possible, before our faces, and which have existed by the million as far back as history extends? And yet the children of God should not allow themselves for a moment to forget, that by nature they are children of wrath like all others; nor will any renewed soul ever utter any thing inconsistent with that ancient exclamation of God's servant, O Lord, thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed![1]

[1] Jer., xx. 7.

CHAPTER VIII.

REGENERATION: ITS NATURE, AND THE MODE OF ITS OCCURRENCE.

I. 1. Relation of the New Birth to our Effectual Calling.—2. The Posture of this great doctrine in the Jewish mind, during the Ministry of Christ: Joseph of Arimathea—Nicodemus.—3. Explanation of it by Jesus to Nicodemus.—4. His statement of the ground and manner of it.—5. Relation of the Doctrine of this Statement of Jesus to the Spiritual System of the Scriptures, and of the Plan of Salvation.—II. 1. Regeneration defined.—2. It is one of the Benefits of the Covenant of Redemption.—3. It is wrought in Man by the Holy Ghost.—4. The Elect of God, and they only, are Born Again.—5. Divine Truth the Efficient Instrument in our Regeneration.—6. The Satisfaction made by Christ, is the Meritorious Cause of our Regeneration.—7. In Regeneration our Nature is Renewed in the Image of God.—III. 1. Force of the Truths stated, in their bearing on questions passed over.—2. The State of the Human Soul in its Regeneration.—3. Concerning the Salvation of Infant Souls.—4. Restatement of the sum of Saving Knowledge, touching our Divine Regeneration: (*a*) We must perish unless we are restored to the Image of God: (*b*) We are restored by the Divine Renovation of our Nature: (*c*) The Nature thus Renovated is the same Nature that Fell: (*d*) The Holy Ghost is the Efficient Agent: (*e*) Divine Truth the Efficient Instrument: (*f*) It is in, and for the sake of, Jesus Christ: (*g*) God is the Model after which it is wrought: (*h*) Man is wholly Passive in this new-creating act of God: (*i*) It is a sovereign and graeious act of God the Creator and Saviour.—5. The Certainty, the Neeessity, and the Efficacy of this great Spiritual Change in Man.

I.—1. We are to bear in mind continually that the knowledge of God unto salvation is that which is made subjectively effectual in the soul: and that there is no other knowledge which is capable of being made effectual unto salvation: nor is this knowledge capable of producing that result, except as it is made effectual by the work of the Holy Ghost in man. The benefits secured for us in the Covenant of Redemption, and bestowed upon us through the Mediator of that covenant, are applied to us by the Holy Ghost working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ as our Saviour. Thus mystically united to Christ, we have communion with him in grace and in glory: and by the term Effectual Calling, we give expression to that great work of God by his word and Spirit, wherein his elect are united to

Christ, and wherein they incur those changes and receive those benefits, which appertain to those who pass over from a condition of sin and misery, into a condition of grace and salvation. The great change is their Regeneration ; to the explanation of which this chapter is devoted.

2. The Apostle John in his brief narrative of the triumphant entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem, and of the outburst of popular enthusiasm with which he was hailed with blessings as the King of Israel, come in the name of the Lord ; makes two remarks explanatory of the real state of the public mind, thus carried suddenly away by an impulse which they who felt it did not, probably, fully understand. His first remark is, that though Jesus had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him : and his second is, that nevertheless among the chief rulers many believed on him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue.[1] Of those chief rulers, thus acting that they might retain their distinguished position in that great synagogue which constituted so remarkable a feature of the policy of the Jewish people in the age of Christ—impelled by a love for the praise of men greater than their love for the praise of God, as the Apostle expresses it ; two have connected themselves in the most remarkable and affecting manner, with the personal history of the Saviour, and their names have come to us surrounded with touching proofs of their first weakness, and their after courageous love. Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, a rich man, a good man and a just, who also himself waited for the Kingdom of God, was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews. Yet he refused to consent to the counsel and deed of the murderers of the Lord of life. And when all was over, he went in boldly unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus, and bought fine linen, and took the body down and wrapped it in the linen and laid it till the Jewish Sabbath should pass over, in his own new sepulchre which he had hewed in a rock, and wherein never man before was laid ; and then he rolled a great stone unto the door of the sepulchre, for the day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on, and the sepulchre was nigh at hand.[2] Nicodemus was a man of the Pharisees, and a ruler of the Jews.

[1] John, xii. 37–42.

[2] Matt., xvii. 57–60; Mark, xv. 43–46; Luke, xxiii. 50–56; John, xix. 38–42.

Every time his name is mentioned, he is described as that Nicodemus who came to Jesus by night: so characteristic did that manner of approach seem, and so remarkable, as we will soon see, was the interview that night. Yet on a memorable occasion when the great body of which he was a member, had sent officers to arrest Jesus and bring him to their bar, and they had returned and confessed that they had been awed by him; the firm rebuke of Nicodemus arrested, for the time, the proceedings against the Saviour. And after they had crucified him, it was Nicodemus who acted in concert with Joseph of Arimathea in taking the body of their Lord from the cross, and giving to it temporary sepulture. He met Joseph at the cross, having brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds, and took the body and wound it in the linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews was to bury, and put it in the sepulchre which was hard by in Joseph's garden, waiting till the Sabbath day should pass.[1] These two illustrious Jews alone, of all the human race, appear to have participated in this unparalelled event. The glory is all theirs. Even the women which came with Jesus from Galilee—only followed after, and beheld the sepulchre and how his body was laid; and then they returned and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.[2] In the meantime the chief priests and Pharisees, with the consent of Pilate, had made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.[3] We know, therefore, what took those devoted women back to the sepulchre, very early in the morning of the first day in the week. Their purposes of reverence and love were defeated by the resurrection of the Lord of glory.

3. It is to Nicodemus that Jesus, in that interview at night, has explained with the greatest distinctness the great doctrine of the New Birth. Rabbi, said the Jewish ruler, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus, according to that constant habit founded upon his divine insight, responded not to the words but to the deep thought and inward difficulty of the anxious spirit: the great doctrine of a spiritual kingdom, and of the way of entrance into it, which constituted

[1] John, iii. 1; vii. 45–53; xix. 38–42.

[2] Luke, xxiii. 55, 56.

[3] Matt., xxvii. 62–66.

the marked feature of all his teachings, and which found a response more or less vague, but always deep, in the heart of every devout Jew that was waiting for the consolation of Israel. His answer was, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. The Apostle John has recorded the conversation, in a few sentences—the difficulties of Nicodemus, the explanations of Jesus: nothing more striking, nothing more important, nothing more explicit, was ever given to man.[1] Except a man be born again—except he be born from above—except he be born of the Spirit: he cannot see—he cannot know—the kingdom of God. For that which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Moreover, that kingdom which no man can see, understand, know, except he be thus born again; neither can he enter, except he be born of water and the Spirit. That real spiritual kingdom of God is to be known and to be entered only by means of a new spiritual creation. Thus spiritually known and entered—water is at once the sign of the purification of all who truly enter that kingdom, and the seal of all the blessings of that kingdom unto them: and thus can no man, except as born of water, enter the visible kingdom of God; any more than he can, except as born of the Spirit, either know or enter the spiritual kingdom of God.* There need be no marvel at these things, the Saviour intimates, because they seem to us mysterious; for there are no occurrences around us, not even the most common—whose first cause and essence are not inscrutable to us.[2] Above all, they who are anxious and thoughtful about spiritual things, and to some extent enlightened concerning them—need not marvel at that which is perfectly elemental and ultimate truth. But however that may be, this much the Saviour told Nicodemus, that this doctrine of the necessity and reality of a new, spiritual, and divine birth, is not only wholly fundamental in his system of truth unto salvation; but so thoroughly does that system rest on it, that no man can receive any truth beyond this, until this one is received;

[1] John, iii. 1–21.

* Γεννηθη ανωθεν—γεννηθη Πνευματος—ιδειν—εἰσελθειν: born from above, born of the Spirit—*we know* and *enter the kingdom.* But γεννηθη εξ υδατος—εἰσελθεἰν: born of water, *we enter it.* The spiritual kingdom universal: and the visible form of it; knowing and entering the former by a new creation; entering the latter by a sacrament.

[2] John, iii. 3–8.

and that no visible kingdom of God can be justly conceived of, except as it stands related to the universal kingdom of the regenerate.[1]

4. And then the Saviour explained in the clearest manner, both the ground and the manner of this new and heavenly birth. The Son of Man, says he, must be lifted up ; that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life : as God had taught his people even by Moses, when he bade him lift up a serpent of brass upon a pole, that they who had murmured against God and been bitten unto death by fiery serpents, might turn to God and live as they beheld the sign of his mercy in this type of Christ. It is on account of this sacrifice of Christ, and in virtue of it, that men mortally diseased of sin, may be healed as they look to him, may be snatched from the destruction to which they hasten—may be restored to God by a new and spiritual creation, and may live forever. Moreover, this sacrifice of Christ is the result of God's sovereign Grace ; for Christ repeats under the form of divine love, what he had just said under the form of human necessity ; for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. The two phrases—"Even so must the Son of Man be lifted up," and "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son;" are, therefore, precisely equivalent to each other, so far as the third phrase which responds to both of them equally, is concerned : that is, so far as relates to the infinite reality and certainty of salvation by Faith in the crucified God-man. And thus our believing in Jesus Christ is most clearly declared by him to be the method of our knowing and entering into the kingdom of God; the proof that we are born again spiritually and divinely, that we are the objects of God's love, and that we shall live forever. And just as clearly, our not believing in him is declared to exclude us from the possibility of knowing or entering the kingdom of God; to prove that we are not born again, but are left under condemnation ; and to aggravate that condemnation, while it augments both the grounds and evidences upon which we shall perish.[2]

5. If the sacred Scriptures, instead of being so replenished with the doctrine of the supernatural restoration of man to the

[1] John, iii. 11–13.

[2] John, iii. 14–21.

lost image of God, that they are wholly inexplicable as soon as that idea is lost sight of ; had contained nothing decisive on the subject before this explanation of it specially given by Christ himself to Nicodemus ; we should have been obliged to engraft that transcendent truth upon all the other teachings of Christ, as the complement of all—or to disallow Christ himself, as a teacher come from God. But, in effect, Christ has only made perfectly distinct the exact form of the grand truth concerning our recovery, with which the whole Scriptures were pregnant, and to which the Covenant of Grace was directly pointed. And if any thing could increase our sense of its truth established by so many divine statements, and of its fitness demonstrated by its own nature and effects ; it would be the systematic completeness which it gives to the vast and wonderful spiritual system of which it is the centre, sustaining, like the keystone of a mighty arch, one half on either side. The original perfection of man, his fall, and his subsequent state of sin and misery ; his extrication by the grace of God, and that grace exhibited in the sacrifice of the Son of God : here is one limb of the stupendous arch. For the other limb, the favour and protection of God in this present life, and endless glory and felicity in a higher and better life to come. Now fill the gap between them. Man united to this divine Redeemer, who was crucified in his stead, by a divine and spiritual work wrought within him ; which work is a new creation, wherein he recovers the lost image of God—and which manifests itself by Faith in the Saviour of sinners. And now the heavenly fabric is complete !

II.—1. Taking our start now from this clear and broad development of the subject made by the Lord Jesus, not only in its own nature, but also in its relation to the plan of salvation, and to the whole proportion of faith ; we have before us an open way through the innumerable illustrations, arguments, and declarations relating to it, which we find scattered over the whole volume of inspiration. If we are humble and diligent, we need not, therefore, have any fear of going astray. And in the light of this whole testimony of God, I venture to define, that Regeneration is one of the benefits of the Covenant of Redemption, being a saving work of God's Spirit in the elect, whereby, through the instrumentality of divine truth, and for the merit's sake of Jesus Christ, their whole nature is renewed in the image of

God. And I will endeavour to establish and explain the chief points of this definition.

2. Our natural condition is described to be such, that we have our understanding darkened—that we are alienated from the life of God—that we are ignorant of him—that our hearts are blinded and unfeeling—and that the common result is, that, left to ourselves, we give ourselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.[1] In a condition so terrible, it is not strange that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; nor that they are foolishness unto him; neither that he cannot know things which can be discerned only spiritually.[2] The constant declaration of the Scriptures is, that the Covenant of Redemption provides a complete remedy for this deplorable condition; and that besides this, there is no other remedy actual, or possible; and I have ventured constantly to assert, that if the Scriptures are divinely inspired, or if man can trust either his own experience or consciousness, none other is even conceivable. If, therefore, a spiritual Regeneration occurs to fallen man: if it is a means, nay, the very chief inward means of his deliverance: and if it occurs through that which the Mediator of the Covenant of Redemption has done and suffered—all of which has been proved: it follows, of necessity, that this spiritual Regeneration is one of the benefits which that Covenant has secured for fallen man.

3. That this spiritual Regeneration is a work of the Holy Ghost, the whole statement of Jesus to Nicodemus explicitly declares, and the whole Scriptures testify, times and ways beyond computation. Since every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; it would indeed be wonderful, when of his own will he begets us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures; if it could be supposed that this best and most perfect gift our souls can receive—though made ours through the sacrifice of Christ, and by divine light, and divine truth, and a divine begetting of us, should be the solitary example of variableness in the unchangeable God.[3] There are three conceivable human ways in which it might be supposed to be possible for us to receive and believe on Jesus—which the Apostle John calls,

[1] Eph., iv. 18, 19. [2] 1 Cor., ii. 14. [3] James, i. 17, 18.

respectively, of blood, of the will of the flesh, and of the will of man. That is, it is conceivable that such a result might be hereditary—or it might conceivably be self-produced—or it might conceivably be produced by some influence of our fellow-men upon us ; besides which there is no other conceivable human way. But he repeats and rejects as impossible, all three of these ways ; and asserts in the most precise manner, that all who become sons of God by receiving and believing in Jesus Christ, do so as the result of a superhuman change which has passed upon them : namely, they are born of God.[1] Even from of old, God's prophets had plainly taught that all spiritual effects are produced, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.[2] For God's saints are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works : God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus : nay, hath saved us by grace, through faith ; and that not of ourselves : it is the gift of God : not of works, lest any man should boast.[3] And six or seven centuries before the Apostle Paul gave the emphatic testimony I have just repeated, the prophet Ezekiel, in explaining the significance of the valley of dry bones, in the midst of which the hand of the Lord had carried him out, in the Spirit of the Lord, and set him down ; had set forth the very process by which, under the means of grace, bone comes to bone, and sinews and flesh and skin are laid upon them. For as he proclaimed the word of the Lord, there was a noise and a shaking ; and when the Spirit of the Lord came upon them the bones stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. And the Lord said to the prophet, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel.[4] It is not, therefore, a figure of speech, when it is said that Christ lives in those who are crucified with him ; and that the life which they live in the flesh, they live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved them and gave himself for them.[5] For all our hope that we shall appear in glory with Christ, when he shall appear, is founded on the certainty that Christ is our life.[6] And nothing can be more idle than to call that a mere persuasion, which God calls an irresist-

[1] John, i. 12, 13.
[2] Zech., iv. 6.
[3] Eph., ii. 4–10.
[4] Ezek., xxxvii. 1–11.
[5] Gal., ii. 20.
[6] Coloss., iii. 4.

ible and saving power ; working in us to the production of a saving Faith in us, by the new creation of the soul itself ; the very same power, namely, that of the Holy Ghost, by which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.[1]

4. It is greatly to be regretted that good men should allow themselves to reject, and to foment prejudice against terms which God himself uses with great emphasis in his blessed word. The word *elect* and its kindred words are used many times in the sacred Scriptures ; and the word *predestinate* and its kindred words are occasionally used in them ; and the ideas they express and the truths they convey, and which are expressed and conveyed in many other ways, are precise in themselves, fundamental in the salvation of man, and embedded not only in the very structure of the Gospel and of divine grace, but in the very nature of God. Moreover, human experience and observation establish nothing more palpably, than that the course of divine providence is directed under truths and ideas, precisely analogous to those we express by the words divine predestination and election : nor is the course of human affairs, or the career of a single human being, capable of being explained in any other way. In like manner no soul was ever brought to a saving knowledge of God, which did not willingly and joyfully admit that God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.[2] Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied, says the Apostle Peter, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Blessed, he adds, be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.[3] And to this effect is the whole testimony of God concerning that chosen generation, that royal priesthood, that holy nation, that peculiar people, as the same Apostle calls the elect, whose very calling he declares

[1] Eph. i. *passim;* Coloss., i. *passim.* [2] 2 Cor., iv. 6. [3] 1 Peter, i. 2–5.

to be, that they should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.[1] Nor, if we will consider, is there any alternative which does not subvert the Gospel, and destroy its conception of salvation. It is conceivable that all men perish : it is conceivable that none perish : it is conceivable that the idea of the new birth is a mere delusion : it is conceivable, as I have before shown, that Regeneration might occur in either one of three human ways, namely, of blood, of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man. But the Scriptures assert in the most positive manner, that all these conceptions are utterly false. Yet these conceptions exhaust the possibilities of the case, except that the elect of God, and they only, are born of the Spirit, and are saved. Of necessity, therefore, if man can believe God, or if he can believe his own consciousness, this is true. But to disbelieve our consciousness is impossible ; and to disbelieve God is both impious and absurd ; and is, besides, the highest proof that we shall perish, unless we be born again.

5. The instrumentality of the word of God in Regeneration seems to be clearly asserted in the Scriptures, and to be involved in the very nature of the case. As the divine Spirit is the only efficient agent, so divine truth is the only efficient instrument, in the spiritual renovation of man. The Apostle James, contrasting our natural with our renewed state, declares concerning God, that of his own will begat he us with the word of truth.[2] The Apostle Peter, explaining the manner of purifying our souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, says, we are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.[3] The Apostle John declares that the reason why whoever is born of God doth not commit sin, is that his seed remaineth in him.[4] Which answers to the declarations of the Apostle Paul, that God hath from the beginning chosen us to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth :[5] that Faith can exist only by knowledge of the word of God ;[6] and that those whose spiritual father he himself was, were begotten in Christ through the Gospel.[7] And to crown the whole, the Lord Jesus, in that wonderful discourse in which he declares that his flesh and his blood are the life of his disciples, and explains in what manner and in what sense this is

[1] 1 Peter, ii. 9. [2] James, i. 18. [3] 1 Peter, i. 22, 23. [4] 1 John, iii. 9.
[5] 2 Thess., ii. 13. [6] Rom., x. 17. [7] 1 Cor., iv. 15.

so ; closes his exposition with these decisive words, It is the Spirit which quickeneth ; the flesh profiteth nothing ; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.[1] The great doctrine thus taught, seems to be inevitable, in every aspect of the subject cognizable by human reason. Although we cannot fully understand why the Second Person of the Trinity should be called, by emphasis, The Word ; yet we cannot avoid seeing that under that appellation both the old creation and the new are so immediately appurtenant to him, that the former is by the Word of Power, and the latter by the Word of Grace. When he said, *Let there be light*, the result was not more instantaneous, nor the force more irresistible, than when he said, *Follow me!* And when we reflect on the indissoluble connection between the work of Christ and the work of the Spirit, in all things pertaining to salvation ; it seems to me that we would be forced by the urgency of theoretical truth, to infer and assert the connection in the Regeneration of the soul, even if the Scriptures had left the point obscure. On the other hand, if we consider our own nature, which incurs this superhuman change ; we know indeed too little of the essence of our spiritual being, to speak with great confidence of the relative fitness of a work of infinite grace and almighty power on it, considered as performed by the divine agent, namely, the Holy Ghost, with or without a divine instrument, namely, the word of God. But as soon as we come to consider the attributes, faculties, powers of this spiritual essence of ours ; the case is very different. For we do know very much concerning these—and all of them incur, along with the essence to which they appertain, that change which is the product of infinite grace and almighty power. And manifestly, the Intellect, the Conscience, the Will, the Mind, the Heart, the Soul of Man, are incapable, as far as we can comprehend, of being morally and spiritually renovated, except through some instrumentality of moral and spiritual truth. And so the emphatic response of all things, human and divine, confirms the constant and explicit statement of the Scriptures, that while the Holy Ghost is the divine and efficient agent in our Regeneration—and the true author of it ; the truth of God is used by him instrumentally therein ; of itself, like every other mere instrument, incompetent ; and effectual only as used by him. I venture to

[1] John, vi. 63.

make, not without diffidence, a statement founded upon a very large experience in dealing with the souls of men, which seems to me to be a simple but momentous practical illustration of the transcendent psychological truths I am attempting to explain. I have never known a single human soul deeply awakened, that was not specially aroused to the importance of some particular aspect of divine truth, or of some special truth: and I have never known the same soul to be twice awakened by the same truth: and I have never known a single soul that embraced the Saviour at its first awakening.

6. I have said that this, like every other blessing and benefit secured to fallen man by the Covenant of Redemption, is bestowed on us for the sake of the Mediator of that covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ. In every case, such general expressions, as *the merit's sake of Christ*, involve, more or less fully, the whole doctrine of Christ and Salvation. When it is demanded, why it is that fallen man must be regenerated at all? the answer is very obvious, that in their natural state they are neither able nor inclined to serve or enjoy God: while, on the other hand, God is so far from considering them either fit or worthy to serve and enjoy him, that the whole earth is full of proofs of his just displeasure, and his blessed word abounds with declarations, that if we remain as we are, so far from ever seeing his face in peace, we shall all surely perish. God, in his infinite beneficence, does not desire that any should perish, but would rather all should turn and live: and in the manifestation of this infinite grace, the whole work of Redemption by Christ, and the whole work of the Spirit applying the benefits of that Redemption, occur. I have just been pointing out how it is that Regeneration is one of the chief works of the Spirit, as I had immediately before pointed out how it is one of the chief benefits of Christ's Mediation. The immediate question is, how does it stand so closely connected with the merits of Christ's mediatorial work, as to oblige us to locate the meritorious cause of this, along with every other benefit of the Covenant of Redemption, in Christ himself? And the explanation is both simple and complete. For the nature of God, the nature of transgression, and the nature of the case is such, that every transgression and disobedience must receive a just recompense of reward: and this necessity is so profound and universal, that the incarnation of the Son of God, in order

that he might be the Mediator between God and men, and then his perfect obedience and his infinite sacrifice, as God-man thus mediating, constitute the only alternative to the absolute perdition of the whole race of sinners. In the satisfaction which Christ has rendered, lies the possibility of any escape for us; the meritorious cause, so far as sinners are concerned, of all that divine grace ever proposed in their behalf—and manifestly, therefore, of that without which all else is nugatory, namely, their new creation. The grand truth of Revelation considered as gracious, is a Saviour for sinners: the grand duty of sinners is to embrace this Saviour—their grand necessity to partake of the merits, and so of the benefits of his Redemption. As for the elect, they do thus embrace him, and do thus partake of his merits and of his benefits. All the results both ways, are summed up in a single divine statement: The first man Adam was made a living soul: the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. It is the life of Christ—and it is for the sake of Christ.[1]

7. The last point stated is, that in Regeneration the whole nature of the elect is renewed in the image of Gad. God reconciles us to himself by Jesus Christ: therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.[2] This new creation is the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.[3] Crucified with Christ, it is Christ that lives in us; and the life that we live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us.[4] For being dead, and our life hid with Christ in God, and Christ himself being our life; when he shall appear, then we also shall appear with him in glory.[5] Assuredly, this new life must manifest itself by such vital operations as are appropriate to its own renewed nature. But these manifestations are fruits of that life—not the very life itself; graces following Regeneration—not Regeneration itself. It is not

[1] 1 Cor., xv. 45–50. [2] 2 Cor., v. 17, 18. [3] Eph., ii. 10.
[4] Gal., ii. 20. [5] Col., iii. 3, 4.

the operations of our nature—it is our nature itself, in its essence, and of necessity in every element of that essence, and in every power, faculty, quality, attribute, force of that nature, which has incurred this new creation. And it is expressly declared, that when we put off the old man, which is corrupt ; and are renewed in the spirit of our mind ; and put on the new man ; we put on that which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.[1] Renewed by the Holy Ghost, renewed in Christ Jesus, it is God himself after whose image we are thus renewed. And thus of all spiritual mysteries, this greatest is amongst the plainest ; it is our restoration to the image of God ! How it is conceivable that such a renovation could occur, except in the manner pointed out in the Scriptures, I can no more understand, than I can understand how any one can study the Scriptures and not see that they clearly teach the reality and the nature of this renovation ; or how any one can reflect on the whole case as made out concerning it in the Scriptures, and not perceive that under that precise state of case, this renovation is not only absolutely indispensable in itself, but inevitably certain to occur.

III.—1. It does not appear to me to be necessary to repeat here what I have carefully taught in other places, concerning various matters connected, more or less closely, with the grand truth I have been considering : much less to enter upon other questions which, however important they may be supposed to be, are either necessarily resolved by what I have endeavoured to settle herein ; or are in their own nature not capable of a precise and decisive settlement. Two topics, perhaps, from the immense extent to which they operate, and from the deep interest which attaches to them, ought not to be wholly overlooked. The first relates to the actual state of the human soul, at the instant and in the act of its new creation : the second to the applicability of the method of salvation herein disclosed to the souls of infants.

2. Touching the former topic, having discussed it fully as a point of objective Knowledge,* little beyond its subjective application need be said here. The New Birth, of which I have been treating, is the fourth method by which life is declared to be imparted to man : the other three are, creation, natural birth, and the resurrection of the body. This method is illustrated through-

[1] Eph., iv. 22–24.

* See chapter xxix., *First Part of Theology.*

out the Scriptures, by each of the other three; and is repeatedly explained as a New Creation, a New Birth, and a Quickening from Death. Nothing known to us can be more certain than our total passivity in our original creation, in our being naturally begotten and born, and in our resurrection from the dead. If, therefore, our new creation, birth, quickening,—is appropriately represented by the old, in the Scriptures; nothing can be more idle than to assert that in the new, any active, much less any efficient part is taken by the soul. Nevertheless, as I have stated in another place, our passivity in Regeneration is every way peculiar: not that of the dust of which we were originally made, nor that of the fœtus to be born, nor that of the dust which is to rise from the dead: but the passivity in the New Creation is that of a living soul, which passes from spiritual death to spiritual life, under the almighty power of an Infinite Spirit. And besides, as I have shown, the very change involved is the recovery of the divine image by a fallen spirit, which, however much of that image it may have lost, retained enough of it, not only to be susceptible of that very restoration, but to possess the identical nature before and after its fall, and before and after its recovery. It seems to me, therefore, that it subverts the idea of the New Creation, taught in the Scriptures, to claim any activity for the soul, much more any efficiency in its own Regeneration. At the same time it appears to be of the highest importance, to bear in mind, that the renovation is absolutely spiritual; and that the passivity asserted is that peculiar to a living soul, which incurs a vital renovation, through the instrumentality of divine truth, made effectual by the almighty power of a divine agent. I grant that the weakness of our conceptions, and the poverty of language, make the articulate utterance of such distinctions less complete than their importance demands. What I insist on is, that the first distinction is fundamentally important, and the second one hardly less so. For the difference between a spiritual renovation, wholly or even partially spontaneous, and one produced by the work of the Holy Ghost, is total and absolute; and the difference between a spiritual renovation produced by the work of the Holy Ghost, with absolute reference to the nature of the spirit which is the subject thereof, and one produced in like manner, without any regard to that nature, is immeasurably great.

3. Considering what multitudes of the human race die before they appear to us to have arrived at that maturity of their faculties, and that development of their nature, which we judge to be necessary in order to make them responsible for their conduct as moral agents; it becomes a matter of very great importance to ascertain, if we can, the bearing of any proposed method of salvation upon them. Two points may be considered settled beyond dispute, and fundamental in themselves. First, that from the moment of our personal existence, we exist as sinners; and that whatever is meant by Original Sin is meant of every human being, as much of one as of another. The second is, that by whatever way any sinner is saved, all sinners are saved who are saved at all; for there is but one God, one Mediator between God and men, one Spirit, one body, one hope, of one calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one Father of all.[1] An impenetrable veil is thrown across the course of our conscious existence—beyond which our memory does not penetrate; so that we cannot know with positiveness, in after life, what were our earliest mental and spiritual exercises. But, at the same time, we can recall nothing, remember nothing, which impeaches, in the slightest degree, the deep conviction, the absolute certainty of our personal identity, and our continued identical self-conscious existence. If we could pierce that mysterious veil, how many mysteries of our being might we not hope to see explained! I am not able to perceive, in the actual state of knowledge attainable by us concerning our earliest mental and spiritual exercises, upon what ground it is that we can question the applicability to an infant soul, of any part of that glorious work which is allowed to be applicable to an adult soul. Being a fallen soul, why may not the work of the Spirit be effectual in it; and why may it not be united to Christ, and have communion with him in grace, as no one doubts it may have communion with him in glory? To say it cannot believe in Christ, is to say far more than we know: and, besides, if this were true, what would follow would be, that there must be more than one way of salvation, or infants cannot be saved at all. I have said in a previous chapter, that I know of no scriptural warrant, when the sum of revealed truth is taken together, upon which the damnation of infants can be asserted; and I have given some reasons for my belief, that the

[1] Eph., iv. 4–6.

assertion is not only gratuitous, but untrue. To speak of elect infants determines nothing: for unless it could be first proved, or at least made probable, that some of them perish forever as infants, it might well be, and probably is, that all of them dying in infancy are elect. It must indeed be admitted, that the infant seed of believers stand in a different relation to God from the infant seed of reprobates; for whatever can be concluded favourably to all infants, concludes as well for the infant seed of believers; while besides all that, there are additional, repeated, and distinct testimonies of God, that the infant seed of his people are the children of the covenant. The special matter here, however, is simply the applicability to the soul of any infant, of the infinite Grace of God and of the almighty power of the Spirit of God, in its supernatural Regeneration, which, it seems to me, is settled as soon as we admit that an infant is a fallen human being, capable of being saved at all. We ought to remember, for our comfort, that Adam's sin cannot be more effectual to pollute, than Christ's righteousness is to cleanse; and that the resources of divine goodness, and wisdom, and power, are all infinite. And we ought to avoid, above all folly, the wresting of the Scriptures, it may be, to our own destruction, in absurd attempts to make that which we know with clearness and certainty, accommodate itself to that concerning which our knowledge is both limited and obscure.

4. In a matter of such transcendent importance, of which the Scriptures never lose sight, concerning which no evangelical ministry is ever silent, which involves the point upon which the destiny of every fallen human soul turns for all eternity, and the action upon which the Gospel of salvation is subjectively and irresistibly confirmed to man; it may be excused—if indeed it should not be thought necessary, to restate, in a brief and clear manner, the sum of saving knowledge, with relation to it. Thus:

(*a*) Man, created in the image of God, lost that image by sinning against God; and must be restored to it, or remain forever unfit for communion with God, averse to it, and excluded from it.

(*b*) In Regeneration, fallen man is restored to the lost image of God by the divine renovation of his depraved nature.

(*c*) The human nature which is thus created anew, is the same human nature which fell: the change which takes place

therein being wholly spiritual as to its kind, and wholly of the person in whom it occurs.

(*d*) This change upon the human nature of the fallen sinner in whom it personally occurs, is the result of a work of infinite grace and almighty power ; in which the Holy Ghost is the sole efficient agent.

(*e*) The efficient instrumentality whereby this change is wrought in man, is the Truth of God, made known by him unto salvation, and made effectual by the Spirit of God ; the change wrought being in man, and not in the truth, nor in God.

(*f*) It is in Christ Jesus, Immanuel, the Mediator of the Covenant of Redemption, that the whole takes place ; it is in consequence of his work, on account of his merits, for his sake, through his truth, by his Spirit, unto his life—that man is Born Again.

(*g*) It is after God, that our nature is restored ; God himself is the divine model of the new creation : created originally in his image, after his likeness, we are really and spiritually restored thereto in our New Birth.

(*h*) In this work of divine renovation, man is wholly passive ; we incur the change ; but that passivity is altogether peculiar, namely, that of a living soul, which incurs a vital, spiritual restoration, wrought in a manner wholly regardful of its own absolute essence and nature.

(*i*) It is therefore a sovereign act of God the Creator of man —God the Saviour of sinners : wherein, through his infinite grace, not human nature in its totality—nor all human beings—but those sinful persons of the human race, and those only, who will inherit eternal life through Jesus Christ, are renewed in the image of God : and the most remote reason of their individual Regeneration revealed by God, or conceivable by us, in the free, special and eternal love of God, which he signifies by calling them his elect.

5. However any portion of this sublime concatenation of revealed truth, may appear to the carnal mind to be repugnant to all just ideas of God, of man, of sin, and of salvation ; the overwhelming facts remain, that this is what the Scriptures teach—this is what the Church of God in all ages has been nourished by—this is what every humble and earnest disciple of Christ professes to have experienced in his own soul. And it may be as-

serted without reserve, that any representation of a spiritual renovation in man, essentially variant from this, is inconsistent with human nature, contradictory of human experience, and irreconcilable with the spiritual system of the universe disclosed in the Scriptures and confirmed by every thing known by man concerning God and nature. Nor need we be under the slightest apprehension that we can, by any statements of ours, exaggerate the necessity or the reality of this restoration from spiritual death, or carry too high its eternal effects. It is the distinguishing truth of the Dispensation of the Holy Ghost—the nearest test of true religion under the Gospel state of the Messianic Kingdom. Of all the truths of vital Christianity, this is the one which seems to be most easily lost sight of by a backslidden church; the one which a shallow philosophy shuns and suspects the most; the one which ungodly men the most disrelish and disbelieve; the one upon which hypocrites most thoroughly make shipwreck. Who cannot see in all this wonderful array, new proofs of every element which enters into the general statement concerning this great doctrine, and of the grand truth to which they all conclude —and which our divine Saviour sums up with so much emphasis, *Ye must be born again!*

CHAPTER IX.

JUSTIFICATION: WITH ITS NATURE, METHOD, AND EFFECTS.

I. 1. The Friend of Sinners.—2. Our Sins must be Punished in Hell forever, or freely Pardoned by a gracious God.—3. Proportion of Divine Faith: Position of Justification therein.—4. Explanation of its Office in Salvation.—II. 1. Original Defeasance of Satan's claim and power over the Elect.—2. Consummation of their Redemption.—3. Recapitulation of the Work of Christ.—4. Infallible certainty of the Justification of God's Elect.—5. Still, God must be Just, even in their Justification.—6. And his Righteousness therein is most conspicuous.—7. Our Justification is most Gracious, most Complete—Gratuitous—and Free: with absolute Reference to our Union with Christ.—8. The Righteousness of Christ imputed to us, the Meritorious Cause: the Law of God established.—III. 1. Definition of Justification by Faith.—2. It has immediate Reference not to our Nature, but to our State.—3. Its Relation to the Covenant of Redemption, and to other Benefits thereof.—4. Our Justification is an Act of God: and that Infinitely Gracious.—5. The practical personal Effects of this Sentence of the Father: the Ground on which it rests.—6. What Righteousness of Christ it is which is imputed to the Penitent Sinner, as the sole ground of his Justification.—7. The Reality and the Manner of Receiving this imputed Righteousness, by Faith.—8. The Doctrines of Covenant, of Headship, and of Imputation—as they relate to Salvation.

I.—1. The Son of man is come to save that which is lost. These are the words of Jesus: the words of him whom they called in derision, the Friend of Sinners—and whose answer was, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick—I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.[1] It is in the complete recognition of our own sinfulness, that we recognize the need of a Saviour: it is when we perceive the peril and burden of our sins, that we desire to know how we may be delivered from them: and the more we are aroused to a sense of their pollution, their dominion, and their guiltiness, the greater is the importance we attach to any remedy for them, which promises to be effectual. Any serious consideration of the subject ought to satisfy us, that the possible results of the case lie in very narrow limits, and admit of very clear statement. Under the dominion of that infinitely wise, just, righteous, and Al-

[1] Matt., ix. 12, 13; xi. 19; xviii. 11.

mighty Ruler, who is also infinitely good, gracious, and merciful, against whom all our offences have been perpetrated ; it is not possible for us to conceive of more than two general modes in which the sins of men can be disposed of, one of which modes is, perhaps, conceivable under several possible aspects. I will state them briefly.

2. It is certainly very obvious, that unless our sins can be disposed of in some other satisfactory manner, they may be, and if we dare trust either the word of God, or our own reason and conscience, or the common judgment of mankind, they must be adequately punished. And however we may delude ourselves into some vain hope, that the adequate punishment of such sins as ours, against such a Ruler as the living and true God—will neither be great nor lasting ; we ought to be fully aware that what he means by adequate is immense and eternal ; and to say the least, there is small wisdom in risking our souls upon the hope that he will shrink from the execution of that, of which he has so solemnly warned us. It is indeed conceivable, and that is the other general possibility, that our sins may be disposed of in some way satisfactory to God, without his being obliged to punish us for them in hell forever. And this theoretical possibiiity has two aspects ; one resting on ourselves and the other on God. Concerning ourselves, it is no doubt conceivable by fallen man, in his blindness and depravity, that he can himself make to God all the satisfaction which such sins as he idly judges his to be, can require : and this fatal conceit is exhibited in all the superstition, idolatry, fanaticism, and will-worship—from the worship of the Devil and the offering of human sacrifices, down to the worship of insects—which have degraded our race through all ages. Concerning the divine aspect of the possibility we are considering, it is conceivably twofold. For it is conceivable by man, in his abounding ignorance of God, and himself, that human conduct is of so little importance in itself, or is so far indifferent in the sight of God, that he takes small notice of our sins in this life, and will take less, or no notice of them in any life to come : and this fatal delusion is the very life of all the practical atheism which has afflicted mankind under innumerable disguises, ranging from the highest pretensions of austere virtue and philosophy, down to the most brutal licentiousness. And in the remaining aspect of this divine possibility, it is conceivable that God should

himself, independently of man, make some satisfactory disposition, external to man, of the sins of men—as, for example, he might pardon them—in consequence of which we need not perish for them, but might, notwithstanding we had been guilty of them, still obtain eternal life. It seems to me, that of these four conceivable alternatives which exhaust the subject, and one or other of which is, therefore, obliged to be true ; the second one, which rests on total ignorance of ourselves and of sin, and the third one, which rests on total ignorance of God, and which together have cursed and degraded the human race, may be dismissed as soon as we confront them with the word of God, with an enlightened conscience, or with the havoc they have wrought. The alternatives which remain, are all that exist, or can exist : namely—that we must be punished for our sins in hell forever, or we must receive from a gracious God the free pardon of them all. It is one chief object of the Scriptures to reveal to man this last alternative. It is one great end of all the means of grace to press it upon his attention. It is this free pardon of all our sins which is the first of the benefits embraced under the term *Justification*, which has a meaning as precise in Christian Theology, and as decisive of the whole scope of that greatest of all sciences, as it is possible to imagine any term, in any science, can have.

3. Let me state succinctly the proportion of faith, and then locate precisely, the great doctrine of which I am now to treat. God the Creator never designed to deal in the same manner with fallen angels and fallen men : nor did God the Saviour—man being fallen—ever design to deal with the whole fallen race of human beings alike—whether that race be considered totally, or by peoples, or by nations, or by families, or by individuals—and whether God's dealings be considered temporal or spiritual, providential or gracious. On the other hand, it was always the purpose of God's infinite grace, not to permit the whole race to perish in its sins ; but to save from amongst the sinners of that race, a people for his name, a seed to serve him, a kingdom through which the glory of his infinite being and perfections should be made illustrious, by means of their restoration and blessedness, to all eternity. These, the Scriptures call the *Elect* of God. The immediate object of the Covenant of Grace was their Redemption : and in that covenant they were given by the Father to the Son, who was to become incarnate for them, and as the Mediator

of that covenant redeem them by the sacrifice of himself: it being the part of the Holy Ghost to create them anew, and sanctify them wholly. In this work of the Spirit applying to the Elect the benefits of that covenant, they are united to Christ in their Effectual Calling, by being Born Again, and are thus made partakers of his life: and thus united to him as their covenant Saviour, they have communion with him through the divine Spirit; in which communion with Christ, they partake of all that he in his whole Mediatorial work, has merited and purchased. They are, therefore, effectually called; in the process of that Effectual Calling, they are Regenerated; being Regenerated they are Justified—which is the point at which we are now arrived. It may be added, and will be shown fully in its proper place, that besides being Regenerated and Justified, we will be Adopted as sons and heirs of God, will be sanctified through the Holy Ghost, and will be glorified with Christ forever!

4. Now it has been clearly pointed out that the two things which separate between us and God, have both of them direct relation to sin, which is that accursed thing which God hates, and which he cannot look upon with the least allowance. The first of these is our depraved nature, which must be renewed; the necessity of which renewal, and the nature and author of it, are declared thousands of times in the Scriptures; are specifically held forth in the first sacrament of the Covenant of Redemption; and have been explicated at large in the preceding chapter, when treating of Regeneration. The second obstacle to any reconciliation between God and sinful men, lies in the offences which they have actually committed. It never entered into the mind of God, to save a sinner in his sins, nor to pardon his sins while he is still the enemy of God; and it is wholly idle to talk about the justification of impenitent, unbelieving, unregenerate men. Nor is there the least necessity for any obscurity or perplexity, by confounding Regeneration, Sanctification, or any work or grace of God relating to our inner life, with his sentence of Justification, which relates to our acts and our estate, and which is unalterably and invariably founded upon the certainty of our previous internal change; previous, I mean, of course, in the order of thought, for in reality they never are, nor can be separated. It is of our actual sins, all of them, and in their widest sense, and of our persons and services, and of our title to eternal life, considering

us as being actually born again, that this divine act, this sentence of God which we call justification, completely and irreversibly disposes. It is this which the word of God perpetually holds up before the followers of Christ: it is this which the second sacrament of the Covenant of Redemption exhibits to us in the symbols of the broken body and shed blood of the Son of God: and this is the special subject of our present enquiry. Whom God did predestinate, says the Apostle Paul, that is whomsoever he did by his free and immutable counsel, purpose, and decree, choose to grace and glory, them he also called: that is, he did by his word and Spirit, invite and draw them from a state of sin and misery, to a state of grace and salvation, and did for Christ's sake, and by Christ's Spirit regenerate their souls, and unite them to Christ by Faith. And the Apostle adds, Whom he called, them he also justified; that is, being born again of the Spirit, and united to Christ by Faith, God discharged and acquitted them—both from the guilt and punishment of sin, and declared their persons and their services to be acceptable in his sight, and pronounced them to have an indefeasible title to eternal life: the whole of which sentence was founded absolutely upon the merits of Christ imputed to them by God, and received by them through Faith in Christ. What is further declared by the Apostle concerning their glorification,—that is, their possession and fruition of the inheritance thus decreed to them by a title so transcendent, under a sentence so sublime, will be carefully considered hereafter in its proper place.[1]

II.—1. Let us recollect what has been repeated so often, and what is full of such important consequences, namely, that the first promulgation of divine mercy for man was made in the sentence of God upon Satan, for his seduction and ruin of man. In that sentence God broke the dominion of the implacable murderer and liar; and made utterly void all right which he had acquired over the elect, by the Fall of man. In the eternal Covenant of Redemption, they were parties in interest, and were so far parties in form, that the Son of God, who was to take their nature, represented them as their covenant head therein. And what should be the first utterance of the fact, that there was a divine Redeemer, if not the declaration of his triumph, of the overthrow of Satan, and of the deliverance of the redeemed who

[1] Rom., viii. 29, 30.

were his brethren? But God went farther still; for he not only declared the release of all the members of the mystical body of Christ, from the dominion of Satan; but he declared them, in their head, to be the enemies and conquerors of Satan. Standing where we stand, with the whole word of God in our hands, and the total development of his providence and his grace under our eyes; it is impossible for us to avoid seeing that all this is involved in the first Gospel promise.[1] Seeing, then, from the very beginning, the open declaration by God of his determinate counsel and purpose to deliver the heirs of eternal life through the Mediator, from the condemnation of the Devil; it would be strange indeed, after Christ has actually redeemed them with his most precious blood, and destroyed him who had the power of death, that they should go all their lifetime under the bondage of corruption.[2]

2. And however great may be the dominion of sin, and however certain its condemnation; and however clearly and fully the Law of God may assert both; and however earnestly that Law may demand sentence and execution against us; and however impossible it may be to deny, to silence, or even to extenuate the accusations brought against us by Satan; the refuge which is set before us in Christ Jesus, is sufficient and complete. Has not God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh? Is not the righteousness of the law thus fulfilled in us? Has not sin received an adequate condemnation? Is not the law content with its own righteousness rendered to perfection, and its own penalty and curse fully borne? Is not Christ the end of the law itself for righteousness, to every one that believeth?[3] How then can there be any condemnation to Christ's brethren, which are in Christ Jesus?[4] There is the cross of Christ—and there is Christ himself, at the right hand of the majesty on high, in our nature, exalted to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and the forgiveness of sins.[5] Let sin, and the law, and death, and hell, bring something against his ability to save—something against his willingness to save: or let them be dumb when God would justify us for Christ's sake. Do they admit Jesus and the resurrection? Then, the law, which is the strength of sin, and sin, which is the sting of death, and the Devil, who has the power of death, ought all

[1] Gen., iii. 14, 15. [2] Rom., viii. 15–21; Heb., ii. 14, 15. [3] Rom., x. 4.
[4] Rom., viii. 1–4. [5] Acts, v. 31.

to know, that God has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.[1] For was he not declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead ?[2] And is it not positively certain, and so plainly declared, that unless his sacrifice of himself for us had been accepted of God, he never would have risen from the dead ? And so the resurrection of Jesus is an incontestable proof that he was delivered for our offences, and that we are justified through his blood ![3]

3. It is impossible for us to exaggerate the greatness, and the completeness of that which Christ does for us, with reference to our Justification, and to what is involved therein. In the very act of his incarnation, and the manner thereof, he laid the only foundation that could be laid, whereby the original depravity of the elect might be healed, and their want of original righteousness might be supplied. For being conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb of a virgin, he was himself absolutely pure, and replenished without measure with original righteousness : overwhelming facts, whose force we habitually overlook. And his person being thus constituted Immanuel, and his work as Mediator of that covenant in which he was the surety of the elect being fully entered upon ; in all his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, and in both his estates of humiliation and exaltation ; but most especially in every part of his priestly office, and in his estate of Humiliation ; he performed, point by point, every thing requisite to bring around the precise and glorious result, that God might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.[4] Emptying himself, and humbling himself, he has in our nature and in our stead, satisfied divine justice and every requirement of the law of God, by his perfect obedience, and by enduring the curse and penalty of that law, by the sacrifice of himself, and by the manner thereof : in all things, by the infinite dignity of his person, giving infinite value to his work. He has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light, by the Gospel : he has cast out the prince of this world, that is Satan—leading captivity captive, and openly triumphing over him : and he is now seated at the right hand of the majesty on

[1] 1 Cor., xv. 56, 57.
[2] Rom., i. 4.
[3] Rom., iv. 25 ; 1 Cor., xv. 17 ; 1 Peter, i. 21.
[4] Rom., iii. 25, 26.

high—whence he will come to judge the world in righteousness, and to give to his saints the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world !

4. Supposing God to have any elect—supposing them to be united with Christ by Faith in his name—supposing them to be so closely united with him as to be his body[1]—nay, to be one Spirit with him :[2] how is it conceivable that in such a state of case, God will not openly declare their sins to be all blotted out —their persons and their services to be acceptable to him ? And who could object when he even declares them to be sons, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ ? The Father, who is in Christ Jesus reconciling the world unto himself—not imputing their trespasses unto them—will he not believe the testimony of the Holy Ghost who has himself renewed these elect souls ? Will he reject the plea of his eternal Son, who has taken their nature, and who, besides being the surety and the Redeemer, is the Advocate of these elect souls—the very souls whom the Father loved with a love so special, that he spared not that very Son, but freely delivered him up for them ? Surely if the Church of the living God is ever warranted in asserting with unanimous consent any truth under heaven, it is warranted in teaching all its children to say, *I believe in the forgiveness of sins ?* Surely that Church knows, that no duty was ever more solemnly enjoined on it by Christ, than that repentance and remission of sins through his blood, should be preached in his name, among all nations.[3]

5. Still, however, we are warned by God that he must not only be just when he justifies even those who believe in Jesus ; but there must be an open declaration of the divine righteousness therein.[4] We are to set it down as absolutely certain, that so far from being saved in sin, we cannot be saved at all without possessing a righteousness which will satisfy the perfect law of an infinitely holy God. The immaculate truth, the adorable justice, the infinite rectitude—nay, the very nature of God, and of man also, renders the salvation of a sinner impossible on any other condition. What do we gain, then, by covering and denying the guilt of sin, thereby striving to make an inadequate righteousness suffice ? Let every mouth be stopped, and all the

[1] 1 Cor., xii. 13–27.
[2] 1 Cor., vi. 17.
[3] Luke, xxiv. 47 ; Matt., xxvi. 28.
[4] Rom., iii. 24–26.

world become guilty before God: for by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin: and all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.[1] Nor does human experience make any thing more certain, nor the word of God more distinctly declare any thing, than that the natural depravity of all men is far more dreadful than they habitually suppose, and that when left to work itself out freely, its fruits are wholly abominable.[2]

6. But in the justification of a renewed sinner through faith in Jesus Christ, the righteousness of God is most conspicuously set forth: for the very ground of God's sentence justifying him is a righteousness bestowed upon him, on account of his union with Christ, which is not only perfect, but divine: a righteousness, as will be shown immediately—which is made ours, not by deeds of righteousness which we have done, but by the grace of God, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus. For God makes his righteousness in the remission of sins, as palpable to the universe, as his grace is, by delivering up his only begotten Son to be a sacrifice in the place of those whose sins he remits.[3] And that for which God thus delivered up his Son, was our Redemption:[4] it was a propitiation for us, and for remission of sins unto us:[5] was unto God's justification of us: and to give us such a victory over sin, that to all eternity nothing should be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.[6] And by means of this work of Christ we ourselves are made partakers of the righteousness of God:[7] and are invested with that divine righteousness:[8] and are not only free from condemnation, but even the law itself acknowledges that its righteousness is fulfilled in us.[9] This divine righteousness becomes ours through faith in Christ crucified, and is the portion of all them that believe: for there is no difference.[10] For by faith we are in Christ Jesus: and being in him we are justified freely by his grace, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus.[11] In whom also, after that we believed, we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.[12]

[1] Rom., iii. 19, 20, 23.
[2] Rom., i. 21–32; ii. 9–18.
[3] Rom., iii. 21, 25; viii. 32.
[4] Rom., iii. 24.
[5] Rom., iii. 25.
[6] Rom., viii. 37–39.
[7] 1 Cor., i. 30.
[8] Phil., iii. 9.
[9] Rom., viii. 1–4.
[10] Rom., iii. 22.
[11] Rom., iii. 24; viii. 1.
[12] Eph., i. 13.

7. In the justification of sinners, the question of their union with Christ is a foregone matter, which, if it were disputable, would render all access to God for that purpose impossible. Nor is there any question about the sufficiency of their own works as any part of the ground of their Justification—for that question lies even deeper against them than the other: the very conception of salvation, and a Saviour, involving the conception of our guilt, and the gratuitousness of our whole deliverance. For even supposing we could do any thing to mitigate the severe justice of our condemnation, or to exculpate ourselves wholly from a large part of it, all of which is absurd: still, so much condemnation as was left, must be fatal to us, or it must be remitted by the grace of God: and then even if no condemnation remained, the question of our title to eternal life, would be left just where it would have been if there had never been any Saviour: for it is one thing to allow us to escape hell, and quite another thing to give us a crown of glory. The question is never between merit and grace: it is always, as to us, between grace and works. As to any merit in our works, even the infinite grace of God cannot allow us to proceed upon a supposition, which God cannot admit without doing violence to his whole nature and character. As to the merits of Christ, they are infinite; and as soon as they are brought to view, the grace of God has boundless room for exercise, and then both the Spirit and the Bride may say, Whosoever will—let him come.[1] The moment we deny that Faith in Christ crucified is the indispensable condition of our Justification by God, we subvert the whole plan of salvation, render the blood of Christ nugatory, and make our pardon and our title to eternal life irrespective of any new creation. But the moment we admit that Faith in Christ crucified is the indispensable condition of our Justification, we admit also our new creation: for Faith in Christ is a grace of the Spirit, and its exercise is a vital act of the renewed soul. And then it immediately follows, that as soon as our justification is thus connected with the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, it is, on the part of God, absolutely gracious, and as to us perfectly free, that is, exclusive of any merit in us.[2] So clear is this, that God tells us, that no promise of his that is gracious is capable of being received by us, except through faith: and the blessedness of those to whom God will not impute sin, is

[1] Rev., xxii. 17.

[2] Rom., iii. 24.

therefore of Faith, that it might be of grace.[1] And to make the case complete, we are told, and are told at the same time that it ought to put an end to all boasting; that we are not saved by our works, but that we are saved by the grace of God, through faith; and that even this is not of ourselves, for the faith itself is the gift of God.[2]

8. The complete righteousness, therefore, on account of which God justifies us graciously, freely, and justly, is not the righteousness of our works, that is, the righteousness of the law; nor is it any righteousness of our own of any sort whatever—except as it becomes ours by being imputed to us by God, and received by Faith, as we shall see presently; but it is wholly and really the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ our Lord, which is made ours through the faith of Christ, the righteousness of God which is by Faith, even that righteousness unto which man believeth with the heart![3] Yet this righteousness is so imputed to us by God for our Justification, and is so received by us through Faith in Christ, that, so far from making the law of God void through Faith, which indeed would be a fatal objection, we establish the law by Faith.[4] We establish it by our fellowship through Faith, with him who is our head and Lord, and who alone—and we in him—ever perfectly obeyed and magnified that law: and who then, and we in him, endured its curse and penalty. We establish it by making it, in all its fulness, the absolute rule of the faith and obedience of our renewed souls. We establish it, in that it was itself the means in the hands of the Holy Ghost, who is the author alike of it and of our new life, unto all the grace and all the glory of which we can partake with Christ. Nay, it is the new creature alone, that either desires or is able, to keep the law of God: and it is only when in Christ Jesus he is delivered from all condemnation, and walks not after the flesh but after the Spirit, that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus sets him free from the law of sin and death.[5]

III.—1. In the common judgment of the true Church of God in all ages, this great doctrine of gratuitous Justification, through faith, on account of the imputed righteousness of Christ, is not only one of the most capital and distinguishing points of the Christian religion; but it is one of those test doctrines which so

[1] Rom., iv. 16. [2] Eph., ii. 8, 9. [3] Phil., iii. 8, 9; Rom., x. 10.
[4] Rom., iii. 31. [5] Rom., viii. 1, 2.

involve, implicitly or explicitly, the whole system to which they appertain, that whether as a science or as a rule of life, the system is absolutely determinable by them. No complete and systematic expression can be given to the scriptural conception which Christians signify by this term, without furnishing therein the means of determining the faith and life of all who profess Christianity: nor can a precise and complete definition of the term itself be framed, which will not thoroughly and fundamentally involve the grand truths of the plan of salvation. Under these impressions, and as the result of all I have advanced, I define Justification to be one of the benefits of the Covenant of Redemption, being a most gracious act of God, wherein he sets the Elect free from sin and death, accepts their persons and services as righteous in his sight, and declares their full right to eternal life—all and solely for the sake of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, the Mediator between God and man, which is imputed to them by God, and received by them through Faith alone. I will briefly explain the parts of this definition in succession; avoiding, as far as possible, the repetition of what I have already advanced.

2. I will not enter into scholastic discussions, or turn aside from the pursuit of positive truth, for any speculation. They who need or desire such things—whose importance I do not question—will find them in abundance. It is enough to say that in discussing most of the benefits of the Covenant of Redemption, that which we contemplate in ourselves, is their influence upon our nature; while, with regard to Justification, that which we contemplate in ourselves, is its effects upon our relations—and these relations are fundamentally those which we bear to God considered absolutely, or to one or other of the persons of the Godhead. And nothing is farther from my intention than to teach, that God will ever approve any thing sinful either in our nature or our acts; or will ever say or do any thing which will imply that we have not been sinners exceedingly in his sight, or that he ever looked upon sin with any thing but abhorrence. Still it is not any inherent righteousness which is immediately considered as in us, in our Justification—which, if that were the case, would render our Justification impossible: while, nevertheless, such inherent unrighteousness as appertains to us in our unregenerate state, puts our case beyond the reach of further en-

quiry, and therefore, indirectly, the fact of our renewal by the Holy Ghost is decisive. But the specific righteousness immediately considered, is, as to us, an outward righteousness, of which the judge and the law take cognizance. There is no objection, therefore, to calling the proceeding forensic, in accommodation to our weakness ; for in reality what God does in our Justification is judicial—it is a divine, irreversible sentence, decreeing pardon and eternal life to the believing soul, for the sake of Christ crucified.

3. I have proved, in various places, that our union and communion with Christ, result from the application to us, by the Holy Ghost, of the benefits of the Covenant of Redemption : that the whole work of God in our Effectual Calling is designed to put us in possession of the grace and the glory resulting under that covenant, from that union and communion with Christ : and that regeneration is one of the chief of those benefits, and directly involved in our Effectual Calling. It follows too clearly to need a detailed proof, that if by our communion with Christ, we participate in the benefits of that covenant, and are justified for his sake, then that justification is a benefit of that covenant : which follows in like manner from the nature of our Effectual Calling—and its connection with Christ and the covenant on one side, and with Justification on the other side : and which follows again, on like grounds, with reference to regeneration. Being a benefit of the Covenant of Grace, it is obliged to be, in its own nature, essentially gracious. But since those whom God predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, them he also called ; and whom he called, them he also justified ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified :[1] it is apparent that Regeneration, Justification, and Glorification—are indissolubly united to each other—and that all appertain by the Covenant of Redemption, to all who are conformed to the Lord Jesus—that is to the elect. Nor is it possible to see how God could contemplate a sinner as justified, without contemplating him as Effectually Called, and Regenerate ; nor to see how he could annul his sentence of Justification, without annulling every thing back to his eternal covenant, and then annulling it.

4. That which God does in our Justification, is a most gracious act on his part. It is an act performed towards us and

[1] Rom., viii. 30.

concerning us by God, not a work wrought in us by God : and on the other hand it is really a divine act, as distinguished from a divine statement, persuasion, influence, or any thing of the sort. I, even I, saith God, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins ; I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins : return unto me ; for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it.[1] And from this act flows every blessing to us, which follows it in the definition I have given. As between the Father and the Son, this act of God towards us, is not gracious : for the Son had paid for us the deepest price this world ever heard of, namely, his most precious blood. But, as between God and our souls, it is infinitely gracious, alike in itself, in all that led to it, and in all that flows from it. For God himself first provided his only begotten Son as our surety, then for our sakes spared him not, but imputed our sins to him, then accepted his satisfaction in place of our destruction, then imputed to us for our Justification that righteousness of his Son, thus wrought out, requiring of us nothing but that we accept by Faith in his Son, the righteousness so imputed to us, and crowning all by himself giving us the Faith.[2] Let us add to this, the fact of our own utter worthlessness and vileness, in the sight of God, and the conception, as far as we can form it truly, of the height of glory and felicity to which God will bring us ; and then deny, if we can, the grace of God in our Justification !

5. It is in this gracious act, and at the moment of this union with Christ, that the elect are set free. This truth I have explained in detail in its objective aspect, in the Thirty-Third Chapter of the *First Part of Theology*. We now see precisely its subjective position and force. Set free by our new creation, from the dominion, and pollution, and power of Satan, and sin, and death ; we are set free from their condemnation, and punishment, and terror in our Justification : restored to the image of God, we are also restored also to his favour. This is the personal, practical result, in each individual case. The sentence of God pronounced on Satan at the fall of man, was a general deliverance of the mystical body of Christ : the sentence of the Father, pronounced at the resurrection of Christ, was a procla-

[1] Isaiah, xliii. 25; xliv. 22, 23. [2] Rom., iii. 22–25; Isaiah, liii. *passim.*

mation that full satisfaction had been made and accepted for every one whose general deliverance had been proclaimed from the beginning: his sentence pronounced at the moment of the union with Christ of each member of that mystical body, is the individual deliverance of each one of them: and the sentence pronounced by the Son in the great day, is the personal glorification of each one: and then the kingdom is delivered up, on the Lamb's Book of Life! It is the third sentence—even our personal Justification, which now immediately concerns us. Adjudged to be delivered from the condemnation, and from the dominion of sin—though destitute of any proper righteousness inherently our own—there is ground enough in him who is our head and Lord, to support the sentence.[1] The sacrifice of Christ is sufficient to justify the deliverance of all who are united to him, from all obnoxiousness even to eternal death, much more to any lighter punishment for sin. Renewed by the Holy Ghost, their original pollution may righteously be pardoned, and they may be presented as unpolluted before God, on account of the immaculate purity of Christ's human nature, and the infinite worth imparted to it, in his person. And the perfect obedience of the whole life of Christ, is ground enough on which to decree to all who have communion with him, a participation in his eternal life. Not only, therefore, are our sins pardoned, but as I have defined, our persons and our services are declared to be accepted by God, and we ourselves are decreed to be entitled, through Jesus Christ, to an eternal participation in God's Love and Glory.[2] As to the work of Sanctification which follows Justification, and the work of Regeneration, which in the order of thought precedes it, and which is necessarily taken for granted in it, all that is asserted of either herein, is incidental: but nevertheless, both are so involved in the case, that unless they are taken for granted, the case breaks down of itself, at each successive step. The sentence of God, that, for Christ's sake, we are accepted of him—and that, for Christ's sake, we are entitled to eternal life; is not only distinguishable, but is obliged to be distinguished, from the work of God uniting us to Christ, and the work of God fitting us for eternal life. But the act of God in one part of the case, cannot be explicated out of its inseparable connection with the work of God in the other parts of the

[1] Phil., iii. 9. [2] Rom., viii. 28–39; 1 Cor., i. 26–30; Phil., iii. 8–12, 20 21.

case, because, in point of fact, it cannot be truly explicated as occurring in a way in which it did not occur at all. In full view and perfect knowledge of the whole case, from beginning to end, in all its parts, and all its relations; the well-considered, final, and irreversible sentence of God the Father is, that this elect sinner being found united to Christ by Faith, is, for Christ's sake, entitled under the Covenant of Redemption to pardon, acceptance, and eternal life. And it is so decreed: and in its form and in its substance, this is Justification through Faith.

6. The *matter* of our Justification, that is, the meritorious cause of it, is the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. And this has been so often pointed out, and so variously proved, that I content myself with merely adding here somewhat in addition, without repeating what has already been shown. That righteousness of Christ, which is the meritorious cause of our Justification, is not the essential, eternal, incommunicable righteousness of his essence, considered as he is merely God: for that is one of the attributes of the Godhead. But the righteousness of which we are made partakers, is the righteousness of his person considered as made up of the divine nature united to the human in its sinless state.[1] The righteousness of the perfect obedience of this person, Christ, thus constituted, to the whole law of God:[2] and the righteousness of the perfect satisfaction rendered by him to divine justice:[3] the whole of which was done and suffered for us in our nature and in our stead.[4] Here is righteousness, answerable to our natural unrighteousness; answerable to our unrighteousness towards the precepts of the law, broken continually by us; and answerable to our unrighteousness towards the penalty and curse of the law, both of which, as transgressors, we underlie. It will be observed how completely all this depends on the Person of the Saviour as Immanuel; upon his office as Mediator between God and men, and especially upon the priestly work thereof; and upon the covenant of which he was the Mediator. Now the point is to possess ourselves of this righteousness of Christ. There are two aspects in which this is possible—is real. In one aspect, a righteousness like that of Christ is wrought in us—nay, we are made partakers of his nature and his life. This is the product of Effectual Calling, Regeneration, Sanctification, and Glorification. In the other

[1] Heb., vii. 26. [2] Matt., iii. 15. [3] 1 Peter, ii. 24. [4] 2 Cor., v. 14–21.

aspect, the very righteousness of Christ himself is set over to our account by God, as if we had actually wrought it out ourselves in every particular. It is imputed by God to his elect, through sovereign grace ; it was brought in and wrought out, by Christ, as their covenant head, for them : it was so stipulated in the Covenant of Redemption, and it is practically and exactly so done. Because it is, the elect are, for Christ's sake, and because Christ became incarnate for them, obeyed for them, died for them, and rose again for them ; regenerated and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, being by him and through his work, made both willing and able, both fit and inclined, for participation with Christ in grace and in glory. Now the first and most constant expression on their part, of the reality of these things in them, is Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, of which more will be said immediately. But upon the instant of their vital union with Christ being manifested by faith in him ; then they are competent to receive by faith this righteousness of Christ as the ground of their Justification before God ; and then God most graciously, most freely, most justly, most righteously, imputes that righteousness to them. They, by faith, accept it, receive it, rely on it, trust to it. That righteousness, thus imputed, thus received, is the sole ground of the justification of sinners, revealed by God to man.[1] Upon the data stated in the Scriptures, it is not conceivable that the Justification should fail to occur, or fail of its effects. Upon any other data ever yet stated or conceivable by man, it is apparently demonstrable that it could not occur—and that the alleged effects could not follow. It seems to me, that when we have reached the highest form of scientific truth, and find our conclusions accord with an overwhelming experience, and conform to the whole sum of divine testimony ; we have obtained a result on which we may calmly repose, even when the hazard is the soul itself.

7. When we say that the righteousness of Christ imputed to us by God is *received* by us, we necessarily imply that something is done by us responsive to the sovereign and gracious act of God; we receive and rely upon the divine righteousness thus imputed to us ; we accept the divine sentence which justifies us for the sake of that righteousness. When we add that it is by *faith alone* that we receive the righteousness of Christ imputed to us

[1] Jer., xxii. 6; Rom., iii. 22–28; iv. 5–8; v. 17, 18; 2 Cor., v. 19–21; Titus, iii. 5–7.

by God, we necessarily imply that what is done by us responsive to the sovereign and gracious act of God, is the act of a renewed soul; because nothing is more certain than that faith is one of the graces of the Spirit, and that its exercise by us is the first and most constant proof of our new creation. But every one of these is a decisive fact; and the whole put together make a case, incapable of being solved except in the way which the definition I have framed sums up. By some internal spiritual process or other, the righteousness of Christ must be received by us; or salvation must be purely physical, purely formal, purely of force, purely an incantation, or something of some sort absolutely non-spiritual—and therefore absolutely nugatory as to our soul. But there is no conceivable way, internal and spiritual, by which the human soul can receive the righteousness of Christ, imputed to it by God; except by apprehending it, accepting it, resting on it, and appropriating it. But simply and exactly, this is Justifying Faith. Besides, there is in this act of the soul, that which the soul is wholly incapable of doing in its unrenewed state; and that whether what is done be considered in its relation to God, or to the Mediator, or to divine truth, or to depraved human nature. For as long as it is with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, the heart remaining in its desperate wickedness, and its surpassing deceitfulness, neither will nor can so believe; and this is the constant testimony of God and of the human soul. This Justifying Faith, therefore, is the immediate and universal proof that the soul is united to Christ by a new birth; and if so, there is but this alternative possible, namely, that the righteousness of Christ, to which every renewed soul united to him has a gracious but an indefeasible title, under the Covenant of Redemption, sealed with the blood of Christ, must be imputed to it; or the whole fabric of scriptural salvation is a pure illusion, which vanishes as soon as the first earnest soul puts it to the test. Still further, it is apparent that nothing in the act of faith itself, receiving the imputed righteousness of Christ, or in him who performs that act; is any part of the righteousness of Christ thus imputed: wherefore it is wholly absurd to say, that they, or either of them, are any part of the meritorious cause of that Justification, of which it has been abundantly proved that the imputed righteousness of Christ is the sole meritorious cause, either actual or conceivable. The act of believing, or the soul

that believes, may or may not be meritorious, in some sense or other: it is merely idle to move that enquiry in this relation. For justifying Faith is the mere vital evidence of our union with Christ, and so of the fitness, for Christ's sake, of the imputation of his righteousness; the mere instrument by which we are united to Christ, and by which, in consequence of our union and communion with Christ, we receive this, and every other benefit of the Covenant of Redemption. And so, as the Apostle Paul has explained all in one sentence, Christ crucified is unto them which are called, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.[1]

8. No aspect of the spiritual system of the sacred Scriptures is more striking and characteristic, than that which developes their conception and statement of covenant, of Headship, and of imputation, of which I have now spoken so much. These doctrines stand or fall together; and the plan of salvation is simple and precise, if we will accept these grand and controlling ideas of God, in the manner and in the proportion in which he has diffused them through all other revealed truths. If any thing is indispensable to the salvation of sinners, surely the pardon of their sins is: and if any true saying of God is worthy of all acceptation, surely that one is, which declares that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, with the chief of whom it were well if we could feel more keenly that we might justly class ourselves. But, how a sinner can be pardoned and saved unless his sins were imputed to Christ, and the righteousness of Christ imputed to him; the Scriptures do not tell us, nor is man able to conceive. And how our sins could be imputed to Christ, or his righteousness could be imputed to us, unless he should take our nature, and take our place, and so become our Federal head, in the whole matter of our salvation; none ever knew, ever disclosed. And that one of the three Persons of the Adorable Godhead, should become incarnate as the Federal head of all saved sinners, and as the Mediator between God and men, should do and suffer, what Christ has done and suffered, involving at every step the glory of God, and the fate of God's created universe, and the destiny of God's rational creatures; and yet so far from doing this by covenant, that both the other persons of the Godhead should be idle and unconcerned spectators of

[1] 1 Cor., i. 23, 24.

prodigies so awful and so decisive, is hardly less insupportable, than the escape of such monstrous suggestions, by the perdition of every sinner that exists! Why should we resort to such fatal absurdities? Why need we seek to pervert the word of God? The Covenant of Redemption, the Headship of the Son of God, the doctrine of Imputation—these sublime truths with which the Scriptures are replenished, reduce the whole doctrine of Salvation, as a part of the spiritual system of the universe, to a form as distinct and coherent as the most positive truth is capable of assuming. And in this form, salvation, become a sublime science, is only purged from human folly, to run in its own strength its own career. To all penitent and all believing souls, the light, and the life, and the joy, and the peace that passeth all understanding! To all justified souls, the outward demonstration of the reality and the completeness of their Redemption, and the inward means of a sweet sense, a comforting assurance, an unshaken confidence, that their sins are pardoned, and that they shall see God's face in peace! To all suffering and tried souls, an inexpressible comfort, founded on the completeness of God's love, and of the proof of it, that he is not punishing but is purging them for the coming glory, and that all things work together for their good! To all doubting and troubled souls, a refuge like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land—a refreshment for which they long even as the hart panteth for the water brooks! Let all the waves and all the billows go over us, and let deep call unto deep exulting over us! God hath depths still more awful than their depths, from the deepest of which this voice of his love comes to us ever more—God hath the water of the river of eternal life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb!

CHAPTER X.

ADOPTION: ITS GROUNDS, NATURE, AND FRUITS.

I. 1. Analogy between the treatment of the Divine Attributes, and the Graces of the Spirit.—2. Diversities of the treatment of both subjects: and the Effect.—3. Treatment of the latter subject by the Apostle Paul.—4. His method adopted, and applied.—II. 1. Scriptural account of our Adoption, as Sons of God.—2. The Act of Adoption is by the Father, for the sake and upon the Designation of Christ, in behalf of those who have been Regenerated by the Spirit, and Justified by the Father.—3. Relation of Adoption both to the outward Acts and inward Work of God, in our Salvation.—4. Adoption defined: Portions of the Definition which have been explained sufficiently: Portions which require further explanation.—III. 1. By Adoption as Sons of God our Relations to Sin are changed.—2. Our Relations to the Law of God are changed.—3. Our Relations to all Earthly Things, and to God's Providence over them and us, are changed.—4. The Relations of our inner life to God are changed.—IV. 1. Our Heirship.—2. Heirs of all the Promises.—3. Heirs of God and Joint Heirs with Christ.—4. As such, we have an indefeasible Title to the whole world: that is to the Work and Glory of God as Creator.—5. And constitute the kingdom of God: inheriting the Work and Glory of God as Saviour.—6. And God has given himself to us, as our Crowning Inheritance.—V. 1. Particular Truths: Proportion of Faith: Spiritual Insight.—2. The Lot of each Heir: the Crown of each: the Positive Consideration of the New Creature.—3. Illustrative deduction: career of each saved Soul.

I.—1. When we attempt to consider the perfections of God, it is necessary for us to bear in mind continually, that it is one and the same infinite Spirit, which is always the subject of our meditations. It is our own weakness which obliges us to contemplate that glorious being in various, and to some extent, separate aspects, in order to obtain some satisfying knowledge of an existence which we cannot contain in one view. Something analogous occurs when we address ourselves to the consideration of the life of God in the soul of man. We must not allow ourselves to forget that the New Creature is the same and the single object of our scrutiny, no matter how variously we may contemplate it, or the life of God manifested in it, or upon it, or by it. What we endeavour is, to get more perfect knowledge of it, and of God in his dealings with it, by means of all the aspects under which we

successively consider it. In this way such terms as, acts of God, works of God, graces of the Spirit, gifts of God, benefits of the covenant, elect, regenerate, justified—and multitudes like them, become specific, and convey precise knowledge. In one case it is God himself who is the immediate object of our enquiry ; in the other case it is the New Creature ; in both cases the distinct and constant impression of the true nature of our pursuit, will prove of the highest value in making our progress at once clear and sure.

2. If it had happened that the first systematic expositors of divine truth, in both of these transcendent departments of knowledge, had been so illuminated of God that a perfect conception of the subject, a perfect method of treating it, and a perfect order of developing it and classifying its results, had been hit upon —and had been followed by all subsequent teachers : in what a different posture would the sublime science of God, and the exact and systematic knowledge of it by men, this day stand ! Yet such a beginning, and progress, and result, would have been utterly different from all that has occurred touching all knowledge : and what may be safely pronounced impossible with regard to the humblest departments of knowledge, is preposterous when demanded concerning a knowledge which embraces, on one hand the incomprehensible God, and on the other the depths of the human soul—and lying between the two all their boundless relations to each other. Confining myself to the matter immediately before me, and to the illustration of it in the preceding paragraph ; it is apparent that to make it fundamental that either the knowledge of the divine perfections, or the knowledge of the New Creature, should be perfect on our part, before we can say it is certain, is merely absurd, and puts an end at once to all attempts to demonstrate, to develope, and to classify, what knowledge is really attainable. But if neither of these knowledges is perfect, or can be : then it follows that all who endeavour to obtain either of them, or to distinguish, and to impart them, are liable, even while they essentially agree with each other—to differ in many subordinate particulars, or even to reach the same result by divers ways. To say nothing of diversities in gifts and attainments of those who devote themselves to such attempts ; the infinite compass of both subjects is such, that they may, from different points of view, be cast into systems

adopting different distinctions and a different nomenclature—and all be really true ; or into systems developing, one, some particular portion, and another, some different portion, and the whole fit and supplement each other. It is impossible to give names and places, in any human system intended to aid men in the pursuit of truth, to every thing in God which every pious heart knows to be worthy of love and praise—that is to every known perfection of God's nature. In like manner, it is impossible in any such system, to give names and places to every act of God for the New Creature, and every work of God in it, and every manifestation of the life of God by the New Creature—that is to every benefit and every blessing of the Covenant of Redemption. Nor is this a reproach to the truth—nor even a hindrance to its pursuit and attainment. It is only a great lesson to us to have charity for those who are weaker than ourselves, and yet not to follow implicitly after those who are stronger than ourselves, but to follow Christ only. It is for God's truth—to which such reflections ought to drive us as to our only satisfying resource—an abiding proof of its infinite glory and fulness. For here is a small volume which any superior man could master absolutely in a few months, if it were the product of merely human intelligence ; and yet the greatest of mankind through all ages, and after life-long study of it, have all united in this strange testimony—the wayfaring man, though he were a fool, need not err concerning the great and pervading sense of this book—but its depths are unfathomable by any created intelligence !

3. These observations will perhaps appear the more suitable in this place, when it is recollected that we are in the midst of subjects of the very highest importance—whose treatment has been very various, even by such as hardly differed perceivably concerning the absolute nature of the subjects themselves. Which are the decisive benefits of the Covenant of Redemption—those which draw after them and involve the rest ? Which do the Scriptures themselves give this distinct prominence to—and what names do they affix to them ? How, according to the nature of man, and the laws of his being in the pursuit of truth—are these grand points to be most justly and truly ordered ? It is here, as I have already explained, that our weakness manifests itself in a manner analogous to the manifestation of it, when the attributes of God are to be treated by us. I have sought, upon that greatest

of all difficulties, to suggest a classification, and to demonstrate the foundations of it. And now coming upon a subordinate but analogous difficulty, and fully sensible of its extreme importance in many aspects of practical religion as well as systematic truth ; I have preferred, up to this point, to rely on the force and coherence of the truth itself for the vindication of the particular benefits of the Covenant of Redemption, which have been selected for special treatment ; rather than to discuss the question separately. The Apostle Paul has given us a precise and comprehensive statement of the subject, which ought to be taken as our guide. His statement grounds itself upon that division of mankind which is perfectly decisive—namely, such as do, and such as do not, love God. Now, says he, all who love God, do so because they are the called according to his purpose. For God having, from eternity, a perfect knowledge of his children according to the election of grace, predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son. Their calling, under the power of which they became lovers of God, was the result of that predestination : as the predestination was the result of God's distinct, personal, eternal knowledge of his own.[1] The result of that calling and its antecedents and consequences, was their justification. And the result of that justification, and all that preceded, was their glorification. And the end of all is, that nothing shall ever separate them from that love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, which is the foundation, in all respects, of that love of theirs for God with which the Apostle's statement began.[2] It seems to me this, while it admits not of being gainsaid—is at once decisive and sufficient.

4. It is this divine summary which I have carefully followed—and shall follow to the end. That to which the elect were predestinated by God, was that they should be conformed to the image of his Son ; and their love to God is incontestable proof that they have been thus conformed.[3] The Scriptures abundantly teach us that this conformity is the result of the work of the Holy Ghost : that this work of the Spirit is a benefit of the Covenant of Grace ; and that this love of the elect for God is a grace of the Spirit. I have therefore commenced this Book, and this immediate question of the life of God in the soul, with the demonstration of our union and communion with Christ, by means of the application to us of the benefits of the Covenant of Re-

[1] 2 Tim., ii. 19. [2] Rom., viii. 28–39. [3] 1 John, iv. 6–10.

demption by the Holy Ghost. In the second place, I have discussed that divine calling of God, which the Apostle declares to be an infallible result in the case of every one predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ; in which that union and communion with Christ, before spoken of, is consummated. Now that communion with Christ is a participation with him, in all the benefits of the Covenant of Redemption, secured by him for the elect, that is, in all the grace and all the glory of the Redeemer. And this communion with him is founded on the double participation of a common life between Christ and the believer: first, by Christ taking the nature of man, and secondly, by the new creation of man by the Holy Ghost: and this New Birth of the human soul is the most decisive matter to us, in our calling of God. I have, therefore, in the third place, demonstrated this great reality of Regeneration. Another fruit of our divine calling asserted by the Apostle, is our Justification, which is explicated in the chapter immediately preceding this. What is demonstrated thus far then is, our Union and Communion with Christ, our Effectual Calling of God, and, as the result of both, our Regeneration, and our Justification. But besides being born again, and besides being pardoned and decreed to be entitled to eternal life for Christ's sake; there are unsearchable riches of that grace whereof we are made partakers through our fellowship with Christ our Saviour; one of the most precious and immense portions of which follows, in a manner, immediately on our Justification, as that does on our Regeneration. This is summarily expressed by the term *Adoption*, whose precise place and signification in the œconomy of salvation subjectively considered, is thus ascertained; and whose ground, nature, and fruits, will now be briefly explained.

II.—1. When the fulness of the time was come, says the Apostle Paul, treating this subject expressly, God sent forth his Son, made of woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore, thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.[1] Undoubtedly one part of the object of the Apostle in the passage from which this statement is taken, was

[1] Gal., iv. 4–7.

to explain the great superiority of the condition of believers under the Gospel Church state, to their condition under the Mosaic dispensation. This, however, only makes more distinct the real nature of the great doctrine we are examining, after it has attained its final and complete form. And so, in another Epistle, he tells us that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath chosen the faithful in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.[1] And the Apostle John speaking of the advent of Christ and his rejection by the Jewish people, adds, But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.[2] It is in this manner that, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith unto this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.[3] It was because the children of God were partakers of flesh and blood, that the Son of God also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil: and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For Christ that sanctifieth, and the children of God who are sanctified, are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. And so deep and so effectual is this participation of our nature by Christ, and this participation of his nature by his brethren, that it is said it became God, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. And the conclusion of a connected statement full of so many wonders, is that in all things it became Christ to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in all things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Surely we ought to lay to heart such things as these. For inconceivably precious as the matters thus revealed to us are, it is also inconceivable how we shall escape if we

[1] Eph., i. 1–6. [2] John, i. 12, 13. [3] Rom., v. 1, 2.

neglect so great salvation: a salvation taught by the Lord himself, God bearing witness both with signs and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his will.[1]

2. It is God the Father who adopts us as his children. It is expressly written, Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.[2] That we should be holy and without blame before him in love, he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.[3] He actually adopts us as sons only by Christ—only in Christ—only for the sake of Christ—only after we have trusted in Christ—only after he has justified us on account of the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith: he does it to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved—in whom also after we believed, we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.[4] Nothing—absolutely nothing—in our salvation, leaves Christ out of view for a single instant. This adopting act of the Father might seem to have sufficient relevancy to Christ—without demanding some new and precise intervention on his part, in the case of every child of God. For the whole matter proceeds upon what he has already done—and upon what both the Father and the Spirit have already done in his name and for his sake—and upon what the penitent and believing soul has obtained from him and through him. But no: Christ must interpose directly. This soul has received Christ—it believes on his name—it is born of God. Shall it not be adopted by God as a Son—and if a Son, then an heir—an heir of God, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ? Yes—yes, surely, provided Christ will but speak the word,—*To him give I power to become a son of God.*[5] * In every crisis of our destiny, it is Christ who stands surety for us: it is Christ's recognition that we are his, which decides our fate. It was so in the eternal covenant of Redemption—it will be so when in the great day he shall acknowledge us before his Father and the holy angels—it is so at every instant of the existence of every child of God. Nor is there any

[1] Heb., ii. *passim.* [2] 1 John, iii. 1. [3] Eph., i. 4, 5.
[4] Eph., i. 6–14. [5] John, i. 12.
* Εξουσια—jus—dignitas—concessio;—*authorization—authoritative designation.*

possibility that any recognition of us as his should ever be fruitless—even to the consummation of our glory, when he will point to the record of our names in that book of life, upon which he will deliver up the mediatorial kingdom to the Father. Most fit then is this authorization of Christ—this giving of power, as our English Bible has it—this authoritative designation of us by Christ—declaring our fitness as his brother to be adopted as a son by his Father, upon which the Father does actually adopt us. Most fit is it, also, that here as in every other part of applied salvation, if I may so speak, all the persons of the adorable Trinity are set conspicuously before us. It is the Holy Ghost who, by his divine work within us, has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: it is Christ who authoritatively declares this fitness of his brethren, and propounds them for this great and decisive act: it is the Father who, by a most gracious, sovereign and irreversible act, adopts us into the number and gives us a right to all the privileges of sons of God.

3. It is nothing to the present purpose to enquire in how many other senses we may be truly called the sons of God, or in how many other senses even the Scriptures may designate the whole family of man, or any portions, or individuals of it, as the children of God. None of them concern the matter we are now considering, namely, the blessings which justified believers in Christ acquire, by their adoption as sons and heirs of God. God has an only begotten Son—the same in substance—equal in power and glory with himself. It is he who became Immanuel—and who is the divine Saviour of sinners. There is no conceivable way in which any being, much less a fallen sinner of the human race, can become a son of God in any sense bearing the most distant resemblance to the one I have been pointing out—except by becoming, in the very way declared in the Scriptures, the brother of the Son of God, and by adoption the son of God. That way involves the whole plan of salvation—and rests upon the truth and efficacy of every part of it. And, what is infinitely remarkable, it is the concrete of the whole outward form of salvation, brought directly into union with the concrete of the whole inward form of salvation. Distinguishing the acts of God towards us, from the work of God within us—which we are obliged to do; Adoption completes those acts in a manner perfectly

decisive, and when stated by God to us, perfectly obvious; and yet in a manner wholly remote from all human thinking—until God states it to us. We call ourselves the brethren of Christ and the sons of God so familiarly, that we are apt to forget what mysteries of divine love and wisdom, are involved in the terms we use. The whole Scripture doctrine of Adoption is utterly incapable of being true, or even intelligible—unless the Godhead exists in three Persons in one Essence—unless the Second Person be the Son of God and the Saviour of the world—unless the human race be a fallen race capable of restoration—unless the Holy Ghost actually regenerates sinners, and the Father actually justifies them for the sake of Christ the Saviour—unless the sacred Scriptures are not only the word of God, and the infallible rule of our faith, but the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. But conceding all this—without the whole of which the scriptural idea of Adoption is equally impracticable on the side of God, and on the side of the sinner; who could have deduced from the whole, any thing more than that sinners are restored to the lost image and favour of God, are saved from sin and misery in this world, and from Hell forever, and are brought to glory and endless felicity? Admit that the Son of God has taken our nature—and that by the new birth we are made partakers of his nature: does it necessarily follow that we are to share, not only *all* his grace, but *all* his glory? Does it necessarily follow that we are to share with him his infinite inheritance as the Son of God? Above all, does it necessarily follow that we shall do all this as absolutely his brothers—as absolutely sons of his Father; and that by his own procurement, and through the boundless love of God, a divine sentence shall award to us, in this life, an indefeasible title as sons and heirs, not only to the whole inheritance, but to the actual possession and fruition of the earnest of it, here below? It is God who has explained to us that these things flow, as a part of the unsearchable riches of his grace, from that boundless store of which it has never entered into the heart of man to conceive. It is God, who thus carrying, by his acts of grace, the blessedness of our estate even in this life, above the reach of our highest endeavours to comprehend it all; reserves only the perfect completion of his work of grace within us—through our progressive sanctification—that we may be fitted at last for the

eternal weight of glory to which our title is now complete. Consider that God has said to us, Ye are by nature children of wrath: consider also that he has said to us, Ye are the light of the world! The danger is not great, of our exaggerating the distance between these two states.

4. I therefore define that Adoption is one of the benefits of the Covenant of Redemption secured to the elect, being a most gracious act of God the Father, in and through his only Son Jesus Christ, whereby all that have been regenerated and justified, being openly propounded as brethren of Christ, are taken into the number, receive the name, and are admitted to all the liberties and privileges of the sons of God, and are made heirs of all the promises, heirs of God and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. After what has been proved in this and several preceding chapters, there is no necessity to enlarge upon all the separate parts of this definition. That the grace of Adoption into the family of God is a benefit of the Covenant of Redemption: that it is secured therein to all the elect of God, and to none besides: that it is God the Father who pronounces the sentence of Adoption, and that it is not a work of God within us, but an act of God—and that of mere grace towards us: that it is an act performed solely for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, in favour only of his regenerated and justified brethren, to whom this very thing is conceded by him in a way of authoritative designation: and that therein they are admitted to the number and receive the name of sons of God: all these fundamental truths have—as I suppose—been so variously established and explained, that no one who accepts the general doctrine of this whole Treatise, will question here that they are positive truths of the Knowledge of God Subjectively Considered. The remaining portion of the definition, which asserts that in our adoption we are admitted to all the liberties and privileges of sons of God—and are made heirs of all the promises, heirs of God and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ: will require further exposition. It is very manifest, however, that the priceless and immeasurable blessings and benefits, liberties and privileges, immunities and dignities which appertain to the sons of God: can be treated in an attempt like this, only under a severe and narrow classification. And all those exceeding great and precious promises of God: all that unsearchable riches of grace and glory with Christ: all those

divine liberties and immunities to the whole of which, as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, we acquire by our Adoption an irreversible title, sealed with the blood of Christ, attested by the Spirit of God, grounded on the eternal love of the Father, and guaranteed by the everlasting Covenant of Redemption : all the vastness of this incorruptible and undefiled inheritance : what can mortal powers, restricted within bounds so limited, do concerning it, beyond some brief, general, distinguishing recapitulation of some of the chief parts, which are near enough to us to be seen with some distinctness ! This is what I must now attempt.

III.—1. By our adoption as sons of God, all our relations to sin, to condemnation on account of it, and to slavish terror by reason of it, are totally changed. Being dead to sin, we cannot any longer live in sin. Having been planted in the likeness of the death of Christ, the same thing must occur with reference to his resurrection. For our old man was crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Having died with Christ we must also live with him : free from the dominion both of sin and of death : but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Sharing with the Son of God, who is not ashamed to call us his brethren, a common nature both by reason of his incarnation and our regeneration, and then for Christ's sake not only justified by the Father but adopted as his sons ; immunities the most immense touching our former sinful and miserable estate are granted to us—and privileges the most immense touching our new estate of deliverance, security and peace, are bestowed upon us.[1] For we have peace with God ; peace which we obtained through our Lord Jesus Christ ; the method whereof was, that we were justified on account of his righteousness imputed to us, and received by faith : and then there remained no controversy between us and God—for we were ready to take his part even against our own humbled, sorrowing, and penitent souls. But the same faith in Christ which gave us access to God for justification—gave us access too for this peace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God : yea, and are ready to rejoice even in tribulation, for the sake of the patience, the experience, the sustaining hope, the fervent love shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy

[1] Rom., vi. *passim ;* Heb., ii. *passim.*

Ghost which is given to us.[1] As for condemnation, there can be none to them who are in Christ Jesus—who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made them free from the law of sin and death. What the law could not do, the Son of God did: and through his satisfaction and the work of the Spirit, even the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us: and to be spiritually minded is both life and peace. He in whom the Spirit of God dwells, is not in the flesh but in the Spirit: and he who has the Spirit of Christ, is his: and Christ's dwelling in us, is life: and all that are led by the Spirit of God, are sons of God. But the sons of God do not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear: but they receive the Spirit of Adoption whereby they cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children then heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.[2] I grant that these wonderful statements of the word of God, prove a great deal more for us than they are cited here to prove: but that makes it only the more clear that the sons of God are set free from sin, from condemnation, and from terror. It would be wonderful indeed, that when we were open enemies of God he reconciled us to himself by the death of his Son; and yet after we were thus reconciled, and have become his children, he could not, or would not, save us by the life of his Son.[3]

2. In like manner our relations to the law of God are wholly changed. Whatever law of God ever bound and obliged the elect of God, and whatever penalty and whatever curse of any such law hung over them, by reason of any transgression thereof, or any want of conformity thereto; one universal proposition applies to all—we are not under the law, but under grace.[4] Whatever may be said about deserved punishment—is answered by the sacrifice of Christ: whatever about the claims of the preceptive portion of the law is answered by the complete obedience of Christ: whatever about our depraved nature is answered by the incarnation of the Son of God and our regeneration by his Spirit: and his resurrection, wherein he was proclaimed to be the Son of God with power, and wherein is the complete proof of full satisfaction rendered and accepted for his brethren—put

[1] Rom., v. 1–5. [2] Rom., viii. 1–17. [3] Rom., v. 10. [4] Rom., vi. 15.

our case in such a posture that the justification by the Father of those regenerated by the Spirit, followed from the very faithfulness and justice of God.[1] Then came our Adoption as sons and heirs of God, involving not only, but declaring that the deliverance of the children of God is not only from the bondage of corruption, but into a glorious liberty.[2] For where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.[3] Nor is any exhortation of the Gospel to us more explicit, than that we should stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage.[4] Even that unalterable moral law, which is founded in the very nature of good and evil, which was written on the heart of man at his original creation, and was written again by the finger of God upon tables of stone and delivered to Moses; that holy, just, and good law, which would have saved us if any law could save those who transgress it—has changed its relation to us upon our being adopted into the family of God. That blessed law is still a rule of duty, a rule of faith, a rule of judgment, a doctrine of perfect holiness unto us. But its just and inexorable demands as a Covenant of Life—its terrible curse against every one who continueth not in all things written in it to do them—its fearful penalty denouncing a just recompense of reward against every transgression and disobedience under it—its terrible and universal sentence that the soul that sinneth shall die: all these pass us by, and fall on him who loved us and gave himself for us, and who is able to present us faultless before God, yea, holy, and unblamable, and unreprovable even in his sight.[5] We do not desire to be set free from service—nor from obedience; a service the most earnest and loving—an obedience the most scrupulous and absolute—in those who have the most abounding freedom and ability unto that service and obedience, through the deepest insight and conformity to that most perfect law, which is an infallible guide to the will of God concerning our salvation. But we are set free from slavery even to that most righteous law, whose very holiness makes its dominion terrible, even to those who would gladly keep it if they could, who blame themselves and not it when they come short of it, and who would protest with uplifted hands against the smallest diminution of its sublime rectitude. Our Lord, our Master, our

[1] 1 John, i. 9. [2] Rom., viii. 21. [3] 2 Cor., iii. 17.
[4] Gal., v. 1. [5] Jude, 24; Col., 1. 22.

Elder Brother—kept it and then suffered under it—both for us: our God and Father, who is the giver and maker of it, has put that righteousness to our account—and now we are his sons! Let that suffice. And let Satan, and the powers of this world, and all persecutors know, that the liberty of the sons of God, which the law of God himself not only respects but upholds, is not a licentiousness, but is a consecration to Christ, so absolute, that the glory of his crown is as deeply involved as the peace of their own conscience is, in the exclusive loyalty which his followers owe and render to him.[1]

3. And now if we will look away a little from sin and the law, and look abroad upon the world around us, and scrutinize the infinite providence which sustains, controls, and directs all things; we shall discover how deeply our new relation to God as his sons, affects our relations to all earthly things, and to the providence which is over and in them all. Directing us concerning the course of this world, concerning our relations to it and our conduct in it, and concerning his providential care over us; God commands us to come out from among the wicked and to be separate from them—and adds with special emphasis, Touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. And this he tells us has been the uniform and perpetual condition of the duty of his children and his providences over them.[2] Nor is any thing in all God's word more clearly disclosed, than that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.[3] And thus as children of God we recover the right, which our race lost by the fall of Adam, not only to the free but to the sanctified use of the creatures of God; for it is only as he gives us his Son, that he with him freely gives us all things.[4] As to the wisdom of this world, it is foolishness with God; and the thoughts of the wise are known to God as vain. Far be it, therefore, from those who possess all things, to glory in man. For, saith God, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come: all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.[5] Considering that we are but strangers and pilgrims upon earth—and that all things in

[1] Rom., xiv. 4; Acts, iv. 19; xv. 10; Gal., iv. 8–11.
[2] 2 Cor., vi. 16–18.
[3] Rom., viii. 28.
[4] Rom., viii. 32.
[5] 1 Cor., iii. 19–23.

it and of it, are of that nature that they cannot satisfy us, and that they perish in the using: they who love God, and to whom God hath shown that the sum of all good consists in doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, can conceive of nothing more perfect than the provision which he has made for them. Keeping themselves unspotted from the world, they have a covenant right to the free and sanctified use of all the creatures of God, and the infinite providence of God is pledged, that all things shall work together for their good!

4. If we will again turn our thoughts in a new direction, we shall perceive that there is an inward, and very near and intimate aspect of this participation of the liberties and privileges of the children of God. For in Christ Jesus we have boldness and access with confidence to God by faith: an access the result of which is peace with God, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.[1] For joy in the Holy Ghost, as well as righteousness and peace, appertain to us as sons of God:[2] a joy which the Scriptures declare to be unspeakable and full of glory.[3] Moreover the sons of God are led by the Spirit of God—and have therein a divine testimony of their Adoption—of the intercession of Christ for them at the right hand of God—and of their assured participation of the unalterable love of God.[4] They are able to say, Abba, Father, because they have received the Spirit of Adoption: and that is a witnessing Spirit, which beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.[5] And as if to put the matter wholly out of dispute, the Apostle in another place adds that because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.[6] That is, this Spirit is given unto us because we are God's children, and then it testifies to us that we are his children. And this Holy Spirit of God is a sealing, as well as a witnessing Spirit—sealing unto the day of Redemption, all the children of God.[7] And as a sealing Spirit, it is that Holy Spirit of Promise which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, and God shall have gathered together all things in Christ, in whom we have obtained the inheritance.[8] Why then should there be any marvel—that joy in the Holy Ghost should be a

[1] Eph., iii. 12; Rom., v. 1, 2.
[2] Rom., xiv. 17.
[3] 1 Pet., i. 8.
[4] Rom., viii. 14, 34, 39.
[5] Rom., viii. 15, 16.
[6] Gal., iv. 6.
[7] Eph., iv. 30; Rom., viii. 21, 23.
[8] Eph., i. 10, 14.

preëminent element in the Kingdom of God? or that the members of that kingdom should rejoice in hope of the glory of God? Although they never saw Jesus—is there not reason enough why they should love him supremely: reason enough why, believing in him, they should rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory? Why should there be any wonder, that, as the end of such faith as this, the children of God should receive the salvation of their souls?[1]

IV.—1. I have abstained in the preceding exposition from saying any thing having a special and separate relation to the idea of *heirship*—having as far as possible confined myself to the idea of *sonship*. I wished to fix attention upon our relation as sons of God by Adoption, to sin, to the Law, to this present evil world and God's providence over us therein, and to the work of grace in our own souls specially relevant to this particular stage of our progress in the divine life. Whatever else relates to our participation in the privileges and liberties, the rights and benefits, the immunities and dignities of the children of God—my limits oblige me to pass over—as I am constantly obliged to pass over whatever will bear to be omitted from a statement, which, while it is general, ought to be thorough. I have stated in the definition, portions of which I have been endeavouring to illustrate, that by Adoption into the family of God, the brethren of Christ become heirs of all the promises, heirs of God—and joint heirs with Christ. And now I ought to add a few words enforcing these statements.

2. The Apostle Peter tells us that unto them who have obtained the same precious faith that he had, through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ—grace and peace are multiplied through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord. He adds that we, through the divine power, by means of a calling which is to glory and virtue, and having received through the knowledge of God, in Christ, all things that pertain to life and godliness; have received exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.[2] We are told by the Apostle Paul, that it was in order to confirm the promises made unto the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy: that Jesus Christ was a

[1] 1 Pet., i. 7–9.

[2] 1 Pet., i. 1–4.

minister of the circumcision for the truth of God.[1] In other places he states, that all the promises of God in Jesus Christ are yea, and in him are amen, unto the glory of God by us:[2] and that it is through faith and patience that all God's saints inherit his promises.[3] How vast these promises are, we may have some conception when we find it asserted with the greatest emphasis, that godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.[4] And the mystery of that godliness to which such an inheritance belongs, embraces of itself and as incontrovertible parts of its own essence, an inheritance greater than all it could draw after it: for when we have it, we have God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.[5] To all this is added one of the most remarkable passages in the word of God—remarkable for the amazing distinctness with which the final glory of the saints is secured to them—remarkable for the divine condescension and the divine demonstration with which this is done. God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: an oath sworn to Abraham, the father of the faithful, and because God could swear by no greater, he swore by himself: that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil: whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.[6]

3. That they who are adopted as the children of God for the sake of the only begotten Son of God, are made heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, is implied throughout the Scriptures, is hundreds of times involved in statements relating immediately to the subject, and is repeatedly asserted in the most distinct manner. If it were otherwise, I do not suppose any mortal would ever have conceived such an idea, or have ventured to utter it. If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may

[1] Rom., xv. 8, 9. [2] 2 Cor., i. 20. [3] Heb., vi. 12.
[4] 1 Tim., iv. 8, 9. [5] 1 Tim., iii. 16. [6] Heb., vi. 13–20.

be glorified together.[1] If a son, then an heir of God through Christ.[2] That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance amongst them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.[3] He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things.[4] If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.[5] That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ, by the Gospel.[6] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.[7] But there is no necessity to multiply citations of this sort. The conception which pervades the whole word of God is, that in restoring man he will exalt him to a condition far more blessed and glorious than that from which he fell. And as soon as we receive with clearness a knowledge of the way in which God accomplishes this amazing purpose, we cannot avoid seeing that in the very process of our own restoration and salvation, that purpose of God is necessarily accomplished. Human nature has been taken into indissoluble and eternal union with the divine nature; and innumerable human beings have been created anew in the image of God ; and these all have been constituted into the one family of the Father, whose children they are. When we think of what we have been and are, these things may overwhelm us with astonishment and shame : when we consider the things themselves, we must be filled with inexpressible joy and peace. But when we see it plainly set down in that word, which we know will abide though heaven and earth pass away—that all these redeemed souls are made partakers of the infinite righteousness of Christ, and of his divine life by a new creation; it does not seem incredible that they should partake of all grace, of all glory ! In effect, that is just it. The whole inheritance of Christ, as the Mediator between God and men, is shared with all his brethren : the Father adopting them all as his children, adopts them also as his heirs—joint heirs with his only begotten

[1] Rom., viii. 17. [2] Gal., iv. 7. [3] Acts, xxvi. 18. [4] Rom., viii. 32.
[5] Gal., iii. 29. [6] Eph., iii. 6. [7] 1 Pet., i. 3–5.

Son. And hundreds of times in his blessed word, the complete, irrevocable, endless devise is ratified and repeated. And millions are daily enjoying their earthly portion: and millions of millions are enjoying their heavenly portion: and all are awaiting an increase of their portion with every increase, by every means, of the glory of God, in the execution of his eternal purpose!

4. It may serve to give distinctness to our conceptions of this great subject of our heirship—as before to that of our sonship—to illustrate, as briefly as possible, a few chief points connected with the boundless inheritance. And in the *first* place, by becoming heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, the adopted children of God acquire an indefeasible title to the whole world. I do not mean merely, that they acquire a covenant right to such a portion of the things of this world as is best for them, and to the sanctified use of so much thereof as God allows them to enjoy, and that all things temporal work together for their good: the whole of which is indeed true, and of the highest importance to us. But God, at the beginning, gave to man dominion over the earth and all connected with it, and bade him subdue and replenish it. And when this immense endowment was forfeited by man, and the earth itself was cursed for his sake; God annulled the dominion of Satan over the elect—leaving the earth still under the curse, but with the assurance that it should yield bread to the sweat of man's face. When Noah came forth from the ark, God, by a new covenant with him, recognized the claim vested but slumbering in the elect, as I have just explained: and reiterated the original command to replenish it. From thence onward throughout the Scriptures, the purposes of God concerning the ultimate destiny of the earth are more and more openly declared. So far as the present matter is concerned, it is clearly revealed that the promise to Abraham, that he should be the heir of the world, was not made to him or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of Faith.[1] Nay, that this promise to Abraham and his seed, was specific and singular—not of many, but one—which is Christ.[2] From whence it follows, as the Apostle proves at large, that if we be Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.[3] And so the Son of God by his name of *The Seed of the Woman* delivered us from Satan, and by his name of *The Seed of Abraham* delivered

[1] Rom., iv. 13. [2] Gal., iii. 16. [3] Gal., iii. 29.

the earth as our inheritance, from the curse. Two particulars of great importance are insisted on in the Scriptures. The first is, that the creature was subjected to vanity and the bondage of corruption, not willingly, and in hope : and that its deliverance into the glorious liberty of the children of God will occur along with their manifestation, their adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body, as our English version has it.*[1] The second particular is, that though the day of God must come, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat : nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.[2] It does not appear to me that the Scriptures teach that this earth, whether in its present or its renewed and glorious condition, is to be the final inheritance and habitation of the saints, any more than the constant abode of our race. But I do not see how we can deny, without great wresting of the Scriptures, that they do teach us plainly, that it is an immense inheritance belonging to us by the original gift of God ; lost and polluted by the fall of man ; recovered by the blood of Christ ; restored to us for his sake as sons and heirs of God ; purged, renewed, and to be occupied in glory and felicity, short only of our final rest and triumph when the kingdom itself is delivered up to the Father.

5. It is of that spiritual kingdom, as another portion of the inheritance of the heirs of God, that I now add a few words. The truths set forth in the preceding paragraph conclude to the great result, that the work and glory of God as Creator, are the inheritance of his heirs. In this paragraph the great result to which our thoughts are directed is, that the work and glory of God as Redeemer, are also the inheritance of his heirs. I appoint you a kingdom, said the Saviour to his Apostles, as my Father hath appointed unto me : that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.[3] And when one who sat at meat with him heard some touching words uttered by him, and exclaimed, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God : the Saviour immediately

* *Αποκαλυψις υἱοθεσια—απολυτρωσις του σωματος*, appear to be equivalent to each other in this passage, so far as the *time* of the deliverance of the creature, has any relation to the condition of the *heirs* of the creation.

[1] Rom., viii. 19–23. [2] 2 Pet., iii. 12, 13. [3] Luke, xxii. 29, 30.

explained by one of his most striking parables, how that kingdom was perpetuated, and who the members of it were.[1] And on another occasion expressly teaching his disciples, he said, Fear not, little flock: for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom :[2] the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.[3] And the Apostle Peter declares, that believers being a generation chosen to show forth the praises of him who called them out of darkness into his marvellous light: are not only a people, a nation, and a priesthood—but that as a people they are peculiar, as a nation holy, and as a priesthood royal.[4] This Kingdom of God, which the Apostle James tells us, God has prepared for them who love him ;[5] this universal body of the redeemed, this commonwealth of the elect, is exhibited throughout the Scriptures under a threefold aspect: first, as the Messianic Kingdom, held forth under Christ the head and Lord: secondly, as the New Creation exhibited as a Kingdom, every member of which is regenerated and sanctified by the Holy Ghost; and thirdly, as the Church of the living God, manifested through its members, every one of whom is the object of the free and eternal love of God, and has been redeemed by the blood of the Son of God—now militant, fighting for their Saviour and their inheritance—but hastening to their millennial triumph—and beyond that to their eternal glory. We ought to reflect, that in truth this Kingdom of God, though spiritual, is so far from being ideal that all other kingdoms have for their chief object, the working out of a certain security, protection and success for this divine kingdom. And as the divine concession that any such world-powers should exist, was given only after the drowning of the old world, and on account of the wickedness of man, and not until after sixteen or seventeen centuries of progress by the Kingdom of God ; so the whole of them are to pass away—and the highest use of which they are finally capable, is to be made into a kingdom for the Lord and his Christ.[6] And the end of the prince of this world, the power that worketh in the children of disobedience —cast out as he was by the lifting up of the Son of man—is that he shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.[7] As for impenitent sinners—the wicked shall

[1] Luke, xiv. 15–24. [2] Luke, xii. 32. [3] Mat., xxv. 34. [4] 1 Pet., ii. 9. [5] James, ii. 5.
[6] Rev., xi. 15; Daniel, ii. 44; vii. 13–18. [7] John, xii. 31, 32; Rev., xx. 10.

be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God.[1] It is this divine kingdom, visible to men now only in the imperfect lives of the weak heirs of it—but yet replenished with the power of God—and chosen as his peculiar portion; which God has given to his children, and through which he will make them blessed and himself glorious, beyond all that the heart of man can conceive—and that through eternal ages.

6. When God has given to us his work and glory as Creator, and his work and glory as Redeemer—as I have shown in the two preceding paragraphs he has done; there remains, as it would seem, nothing else to bestow upon us. For we bear to God no relation that is not involved in our condition as creatures, or our condition as sinners; and God bears no relation to us that is not involved in his being God our Creator, and God our Saviour. But God has found an inheritance greater than all besides. He has given himself to us! There can be no approximation of the finite to the infinite which will not leave an infinite chasm between the two: and therefore man when created, however really he was an image and likeness of God, stood very far off from God. Compared with the posture in which those, whose portion God is, now stand, the original posture of man is not a just illustration. For in the process of restoring man to the lost image of God—what was done was not a simple act of infinite power effacing defilement and restoring the obscured image and lost perfection, such as it was: but new and transcendent events occurred—and the very process of restoration led to results so foreign from our human thinking, and so inscrutable in themselves—that even after God has carefully explained them to us, and after we have personally experienced their effects—the whole appears only the more wonderful. The infinite has taken the finite into mysterious union with itself; God has become incarnate in human nature. This is the fundamental fact: and it is no longer a question of the chasm between the finite and the infinite—but a problem to be worked out on this new basis, of the inseparable union between the two—the God-man. The outworking of that superhuman problem gives this result, namely, the regeneration of the soul of fallen man by the Holy Ghost—and by this means the participation of humanity in its individual aspect, as before in its totality—with the divine nature: and so

[1] Psalm ix. 17.

a second and very different union of the finite and the infinite—the New Creature. Upon this every thing else follows: upon this all else depends. We must deny the incarnation, or—what would be futile after admitting it—we must deny the New Creation: otherwise we have to stultify both ourselves and God, to escape being thoroughly orthodox and evangelical. These stupendous events, these inscrutable realities—with so much flowing from them as is revealed by God and understood by man; constitute that condition of things which is expressed by saying, God himself is the crowning portion of that immeasurable inheritance which he bestows upon those who, through Jesus Christ, are adopted as his children and declared to be his heirs. God himself is the satisfying portion of their souls. And in return, their love for God is not only the manner of service, and the way of recognition, but is the method of enjoying their inheritance—which above all is acceptable to him. We see so clearly our own unworthiness, we shrink so timidly from the scoffs of those who walk in darkness, that we understate the teachings of God, and our own most exalted communion with him. And yet, if we know any thing of God or of our own souls, we know assuredly that the possession and enjoyment of God himself, is the consummation at once of the glory which he can derive from us, and of the felicity which we can derive from him.[1]

V.—1. In the treatment of such subjects as these, it is of the utmost importance to avoid any approach towards any exaggeration, of the particular matter at any time under special consideration. On the other hand, the certainty and the completeness of the general result, depend upon our ability—while we discuss successive truths—to keep steadily before the mind the whole proportion of faith, and the exact relation of each particular truth to all other particular truths, and to the grand scheme of which all of them are but elemental parts. To an infinite mind the whole is but one truth, intuitively perceived, and that with perfect clearness. It is a resource of weakness not of strength, to take that whole to pieces and examine the parts: or to take those parts and by putting them together reconstruct that whole. And in both processes, the very weakness which exacts them is prone to innumerable mistakes: from which, in the treatment of the

[1] 1 John, iii. 2; Phil., iii. *passim;* Col., iii. 1–4, 9, 10; Gal., ii. 20; 2 Tim., i. 14; 1 John, iii. 24; iv. 12–17.

Knowledge of God unto Salvation as a science of positive truth, the greatest security is that spiritual insight which flows from the conformity of the soul itself to God.

2. Applying these observations to the present subject, we are to bear in mind that all the rights and liberties, all the privileges and dignities of the sons and heirs of God, are by no means instantly bestowed on them, for full, immediate, and constant enjoyment, as soon as they are adopted by God as his children, and declared to be his heirs. Nor is it true that the portion bestowed on each child of God, is precisely equal to the portion bestowed on every other child of God, whether in the kingdom of grace or the kingdom of glory, any more than in the dispensation of his providence. On the contrary, each one has a lot and a destiny peculiarly his own, which he must work out: and answering thereto a crown peculiarly his own, which he will wear forever. And the total sum of all the results will illustrate every possible phase of the immensely diversified problem, of infinite grace successfully applied to save fallen and depraved creatures, under every form of sin, in every variety of fortune, through every aspect of temptation, by means of every method of divine dealing with cases all generically alike, but full of complicated and inconceivable peculiarities; grace abounding, grace triumphant, the one grand truth shining through all! Nor is it true that every gift and every grace bestowed by God upon his sons and heirs, has an exclusive, or even an immediate relation to God's act of Adoption: much less is it true that that act of itself fits his children and heirs for the enjoyment of their whole inheritance. On the contrary, many gifts and many graces, and many acts and many works, of divine love and mercy, have gone before that adopting act of God—and many will follow after; all conspiring to fit the redeemed sinner to be and do what his new condition demands. And the same thing might be said, nearly in the same words, concerning almost every benefit of the Covenant of Redemption, and concerning almost every Christian grace—one after another. It is by habituating ourselves to the contemplation of the New Creature as a real being—as indeed our very self; and to the contemplation of the vital manifestations of that New Creature, as so many qualities, acts, incidents, divinely appropriate to such a creature; that we may best protect ourselves from the illusions of our imaginations and the

mistakes of our reason ; and keep all the graces and all the relations of that New Creature, in their true position with reference to him, to each other, to the Godhead, and to each Person of the adorable Trinity.

3. To illustrate this, in a few words. We have found this child of God a fallen, depraved, and ruined enemy of his Creator. We have seen his Creator, in infinite grace, become his Saviour, and proclaim his eternal purpose to save him—and reveal the plan by which he would accomplish this. We have traced the development of this plan, till it fell with equal power and mercy upon this sinner. We have seen him awakened, penitent, believing—united to Christ : and, examining more closely, we have seen him effectually called by God, regenerated by the Holy Ghost—justified by the Father—and now adopted as a son and heir of God : and what further of grace and glory is in store for him, remains for us to trace. But it is all the while the same soul : all the while the things we have been considering are either the vital manifestations of this soul, first in its state of sin, and then in its state of grace ; or else the counsel, purpose, acts, and works, of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, concerning, towards, upon, or in, this same soul in its two estates of sin and grace. Point by point, every thing may be made clear : but even this is a method exacted by our weakness —as I have pointed out—with its best remedy, namely, a true spiritual insight. And, moreover, every separate point may be made clear, merely as a separate point, and not as an essential element of the great whole ; which latter office of each truth is indispensable to all adequate and secure possession of the momentous subject ; and I have pointed out that the security against this second danger from our weakness, lies in the habit of considering divine things in the concrete and in the whole, as they affect us. Let us be humble under the manifold proof of the damage which sin has wrought to our understanding, even while we take comfort in the proof afforded by the very discovery of our weakness, that divine grace has, in some degree, restored us, even in knowledge, to the lost image of God.

CHAPTER XI.

SANCTIFICATION: RELATION TO THE PLAN OF SALVATION; NATURE: MEANS: RELATION TO THE GODHEAD.

I. 1. The mutual Love of God and his Children.—2. Relation of Righteousness to Life: Sanctification: Consummation of Love.—3. The Life of God in the Soul nourished and advanced to Perfection.—4. Sanctification compared with Adoption: with Regeneration: with Effectual Calling: with Justification.—5. Sanctification itself described.—II. 1. Sanctification a Benefit of the Covenant of Redemption: Effects and Objects of it.—2. A great Work of Divine Grace, pervading the whole Man.—3. Unequal in different Persons: Gradual: Imperfect in this Life: Finally Complete and Sure.—4. Relation of Sanctification to Repentance, Faith, and Love.—5. Efforts of the Renewed Soul after Deliverance from Pollution, and Perfection in Holiness.—III. 1. Means of Grace in our Sanctification.—2. The Word is the great Means: Divine Truth the Effectual Instrument.—3. All the Ordinances of God: the Sacraments—the Sabbath-Day—Religious Worship—Preaching the Word—Prayer—Praise—Alms—Fasting—Vows—Discipline.—IV. 1. God the Author of Sanctification: Its Peculiar Relation to the Godhead.—2. The Power exerted therein exceeds and is opposite to all Power, except that of God.—3. Its Exercise ascribed to Jehovah, to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: Explication of this.—4. This Work of the Godhead, and the Persons thereof, in Sanctification, accords with the Administration of each, in the Œconomy of the Covenant of Redemption.—5. We are Sanctified through the Virtue of the Death and Resurrection of Christ.—6. Definition of Sanctification.

I.—1. When the Scriptures would distinctly express, or systematically explain, the sum and result of the inward dealings of God with the souls of the redeemed; the emphatic characteristic which is usually marked in them is, that they love God. It is for them who love God, that all things work together for good; for it is they only who, having been called according to his purpose, thus love him. The divine method as explicated by God himself, begins by pointing out the fact of their love for him—and closes by declaring his unalterable and eternal love for them. Between these two points the whole scheme of salvation is expounded in one of the most remarkable passages contained in the word of God.[1] There is the loving child of God: and there is God's infinite care

[1] Rom., viii. 28–39.

over him. Would we understand this? Then understand and accept the eternal purpose of God—his eternal foreknowledge of his children, his eternal predestination of their conformity to the image of his Son. Understand, moreover, and accept, their divine calling in Christ, and their divine justification by the Father, during their mortal pilgrimage; and their assured glorification, begun in time, and to be consummated in eternity. After this is told to us, it is easy to believe the conclusion of the matter, namely, that God's love for them will surmount all things, and survive for ever.

2. Righteousness alone can give us no title that will endure any longer than it endures itself. While it lasts, it may secure life to us: if it would secure eternal life to us, it must be a righteousness eternally continued. If it were otherwise—which in the nature of the case it could not be—righteous Adam had a perfect title to eternal life before he fell: and so perhaps had Satan; and then there was no need of the everlasting righteousness brought in by the divine Mediator for the salvation of fallen men. It has been plainly shown that it is by our adoption as sons and heirs of God, that we are put in possession of an indefeasible title to his boundless inheritance; and as a part of it, the everlasting righteousness of our brother and joint heir, the Son of God, made flesh. The very way in which he became the first born among many brethren, was that God did predestinate them to be conformed to the image of his Son.[1] So that they were predestinated to the righteousness itself, no less assuredly than to all the fruits which flow from its possession. Being, for the sake of that righteousness of Christ, effectually called of God, and born again of the Spirit; that righteousness is imputed to us for our justification, and received by us only through Faith. And now, being sons of God by Adoption, our Sanctification is the gradual consummation of that righteousness in the renewed soul. Throughout all this divine process of Sanctification, Repentance toward God is a kind of perpetual revulsion of our new nature against our former estate, and the remains of pollution still lurking in it; a perpetual yearning of our new nature after fuller participation of this Righteousness. And Faith, the primeval vital act of our new nature, becomes the great internal means through which every other part of the wonderful trans-

[1] Rom., viii. 29.

formation, is carried on and perfected. Until, at last, those eternal results of which Faith is, to us here below, at once the substance and the evidence,[1] are fully reached ; and Faith itself is swallowed up in the perfect vision of him who is at once its author and its finisher.[2] For when mortality is swallowed up of life, and death is swallowed up in victory:[3] what shall abide, will be, that undying love of God for his children, and of his children for him, out of which all salvation comes, and in which all salvation will be consummated ![4]

3. By the Fall of man, our whole race contracted, not only guilt, but pollution.* It lost also its original righteousness. But it is expressly written, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord.[5] God himself is most holy ; and the restoration of man to the lost image of his Creator—and the predestinated conformity of the elect to the image of the Son of God—can mean no less, how much soever more they may mean—than their recovery, not only of the knowledge, but of the righteousness and true holiness of creatures having the image and likeness of God, and conformity to the image of his Son. It is not enough that actual punishment for sin should be remitted ; nor even that its blameworthiness should be overlooked. Its impurity must be removed ; and our personal holiness must be restored.† The sum of all this, as a divine work toward, and in man,—the Apostle in the brief summary so often alluded to, expresses by three words, namely, Calling, Justification, and Glorification.[6] As a help to our weakness, the Church of God, in all ages, and expositors of the divine word of all shades of opinion, have brought from other portions of the Scriptures other terms interposed by the same or some other inspired writer, to enlarge this brief description. I have, in like manner, followed the chapter on Effectual Calling with one on Regeneration, which appertains to it ; and followed the chapter on Justification with one on Adoption, which results, in a manner, from it ; and now, postponing the separate treatment of Glorification till we have considered all that precedes it, this chapter on Sanctification is added to point out how the children of God, after being Effectually Called, Regenerated, Justified, and Adopted, find

[1] Heb., xi. 1. [2] Heb., xii. 2. [3] 2 Cor., v. 4; 1 Cor., xv. 54.
[4] 1 John, iv. 8, 16. * Reatus.—Macula. [5] Heb., xii. 14.
† Pœna.—Culpa.—Macula.—Sanctitas. [6] Rom., viii. 30.

the life of God sustained and advanced in the soul unto perfection.

4. Sanctification is different from Adoption, though both of them relate to the inheritance of the redeemed: the former concerning our fitness to possess and enjoy every thing to which title is given by the latter. God having brought us so far as to adopt us as his sons and heirs, now proceeds to train us in a manner that makes us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.[1] Sanctification is also different from Regeneration; for it is not a new creation, which Regeneration is, but it is the nurture and perfection of that new creation, so far as that is accomplished during our mortal existence. It is different also from Effectual Calling: for that relates to the method of our renewal in the image of God, while this relates to the gradual progress of the divine life within us, unto the total completeness of that renewal of man in the divine image. It is different from Justification, with which it is most frequently confounded, and with the least reason of all. For Justification is an act of God's grace outward as to us, while Sanctification is a work of God's grace within us: the former, moreover, relating to our state, the latter to our nature; the one consummated by the Father in a single judicial sentence, the other involving a work of the whole Godhead, and especially of the Holy Ghost, uninterruptedly to the end of our mortal existence, to be manifested afterwards in glory for ever. With regard to sin, it is pardoned in Justification; but the object of Sanctification is to purge it out, destroy it, and supplant it with holiness: and as touching holiness, Justification is, by means of the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, while Sanctification is the result of that righteousness received into the soul itself, as a living and transforming power.

5. Sanctification, considered of itself as a work of divine grace, must not be confounded with sanctity, or personal holiness, considered as a quality in us. Personal holiness in us, sanctity, is the habit of doing only what is both true and good—that is, what is *right:* that state of the new man in which, by a divine creation, not only righteousness in its broadest sense, but especially true holiness—the holiness of truth,* is the habit of the soul. But man, so far from having any such sanctity as this by nature,

[1] Col., i. 12. * *Δίκαιοσυνη και όσιοτητι της αληθείας.* Eph., iv. 24.

has lost his original righteousness; and has, besides, contracted a defilement, and reduced his nature to a state and habit of sin, precisely opposite to the holiness his nature needs. The process of restoring that original righteousness, and perfecting that true holiness—meantime healing and extirpating that inward state and habit of sin; is that work of grace whereby both the quality and the habit of human actions are changed, by acting radically and divinely upon the human soul itself. This vital progress and steady mutation of the renewed soul, is what we call Sanctification; that work of God's grace in regenerate, justified, and adopted believers, whereby the spiritual acts and habits of their nature are changed from sin and the fruits thereof, to true holiness and the fruits thereof. Considered as a great work of divine grace within the renewed soul, it is the method whereby God renews us completely in his lost image, and conforms us entirely to the image of his Son, restoring us to the perfect knowledge and love of his truth, and the complete fruition of his holiness.[1] For if we have learned Christ aright, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus; we put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and are renewed in the spirit of our mind; and put on the new man; which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.[2]

II.—1. The prophet Jeremiah, after distinctly foretelling the captivity of God's ancient people, and their return from Babylon, adds, as a glorious event to occur afterwards, and speaking in the name of God—I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.[3] In another place he calls that everlasting covenant new, as compared with the special and peculiar administration of his grace under the Jewish dispensation; and describes clearly but briefly the Gospel state of the Covenant of Grace, in contrast with the Mosaic state of it. Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they broke, although I was a husband unto them, saith the

[1] 1 Cor., i. 30; vi. 11. [2] Eph., iv. 24; vi. 10–20. [3] Jer., xxxii. 40.

Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord ; I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts ; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord : for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord ; and I will remember their sin no more.[1] Supposing these remarkable statements to have an application to the Jewish people far more exact than has yet been realized ; that, so far from weakening, increases the light they throw on the manner of God's gracious dealings, under the Gospel aspect of his everlasting covenant, with the souls of his people. The very thing which happens, as God's children are more and more conformed to him in their progressive sanctification is, that God becomes more manifestly their God, and they become more manifestly his people ; they know him better continually, and love him more as they know him better ; and all this occurs by God putting his law in their inward parts, and writing it in their hearts. And so, out of the bosom of the Christian Church, in the earliest practical manifestation of these ancient promises, the Apostle Peter proclaims the realization of God's declarations to Jeremiah. For exhorting the elect scattered through the nations, to desire, as new-born babes, the sincere milk of the word that they might grow thereby : beseeching them, if they had tasted that the Lord was gracious, to come to him as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious : he asserts that to all believers he is precious, and that it was in order to show forth the praises of him who had called them out of darkness, into his marvellous light, that they who had been no people, had become the people of God, and were now a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people.[2] And with all these things agree innumerable statements of the word of God. We are not, therefore, allowed to doubt, that our Sanctification is one of the chief benefits of God's eternal Covenant of Redemption ; and that it is no illusion, but a great and inevitable reality concerning the true life of God in the soul of man ; the result of a peculiar, gradual, and sustained work of divine grace in the elect of God—completing the inward transformation which commenced in their

[1] Jer., xxxi. 31–34. [2] 1 Peter, ii. 1–10.

Effectual Calling, and which was established in their Regeneration ; completing too their fitness for that vast inheritance to which, partly in their Justification, and fully in their Adoption, they were declared by God to be in possession of a complete and irrevocable title.

2. Concerning the nature of this great work of grace, the most obvious peculiarity is, its absolute totality with reference to the whole nature of man. The very God of peace sanctify you wholly ; and I pray God your whole spirit, soul and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.[1] A Sanctification extending to the whole man—and to every element of his being : yea, so extending, that his spirit—his soul—and his very body may be preserved blameless ; so that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.[2] For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and we are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.[3] The Spirit which is the essence of our being, and the very condition of our existence in the image and after the likeness of God ; the soul concerning which it is said that God breathed into the nostrils of Adam the breath of life, and man became a living soul :[4] the vile body, frail, sinful, dying—yet awaiting a glorious resurrection, and which may be so used by God's children, as that even it may be preserved blameless, perfecting holiness in the fear of God : concerning all, the exhortation to us is to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.[5] And while we are thus clearly taught the all-pervading nature of this stedfast transformation from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God ; we are as distinctly taught, on the other hand, that there can be no such thing in the divine life in man, as a partial existence of vitality —one part pure, and another impure—some sins mortified and strangled while others are allowed and cherished. Much less is there any rule of compensation by which one excess which we persuade ourselves is good, can be set against another excess which we fear may be evil ; and least of all can we compensate by outward acts—even the giving of our body to be burned—for inward defilement, which nothing but an inward work of divine grace can reach. Along with such deep and obvious truths, the divine standard of holiness is exalted before us to the very

[1] 1 Thess., v. 23. [2] Col., iii. 4. [3] Col., ii. 9, 10. [4] Gen., ii. 7. [5] 2 Cor., vii. 1.

heavens, and promises of divine aid in our endeavours after it are mingled with divine exhortations and commands to us, to make the most earnest efforts after complete conformity to God. Nay, when every thing else fails to stimulate the renewed soul to that earnestness which God requires in our pursuit of the infinite prize set before us ; he hides his face from us, that we may realize more adequately that he is the only satisfying portion of the soul. And so in every form in which a subject so immense, and interests so transcendent, can be presented to the heirs of eternal life ; the one great conception of total conformity to God—absolute consecration to his service—engrossing love for his cause—his name—himself, pervades the divine word, and pervades the sanctified heart, as the sum of all true blessedness on earth, and the real preparation for eternal felicity and glory.

3. A work of this sort must needs be unspeakably various—we may say unequal—when one Christian heart is compared with another—in the boundless diversities of spiritual experience, and spiritual attainments. It must, of necessity, also, be gradual ; and cannot, in this life, ever be absolutely perfect, in the sense that no further attainment can be made, or in the sense that no remains of sin are left to be subdued. All these conditions have a certain mutual dependence on each other. If absolute perfection in our conformity to God were attainable in our present state ; it is not easy to see how any diversity of experience could exist, either in the process of reaching the one absolute type of the immaculate holiness of the one living and true God, or in the result after it was reached ; any more than how any thing could be left, after that, for heaven itself to add to us. The case is far otherwise. There are endless diversities in the endowments of the creature—in the operations of the Spirit—in the gifts of God—in the administration of the Lord—in the manifestations of the Spirit given to men to profit withal.[1] Under all these diverse conditions, each soul incurs a threefold operation ; one to put off the old man—one to be renewed in the spirit of the mind—one to put on the new man.[2] Every soul must be planted together with Christ in the likeness of his death, and must be planted also in the likeness of his resurrection ; we must die with Christ, and we must live with him.[3] Our nature has indeed been renewed—or else it is idle to say a word about Sanctification.

[1] 1 Cor., xii. 4–12. [2] Eph., iv. 22, 24. [3] Rom., vi. 5, 8.

But with that very renewal, the great spiritual warfare commenced—the spirit lusting against the flesh, and the flesh lusting against the spirit; and these contrary the one to the other; so that we cannot do the things that we would.[1] Between the putting off the old man, and the putting on the new man, the Apostle, as we have just seen, expressly locates the necessity of being renewed in the spirit of our mind.[2] The work of stripping the soul of its polluted habiliments; the work of clothing the soul in its heavenly vestments; the work of making the spirit of the mind—the habit of the soul—recoil from its old and conform to its new life. In all this work wrought in the name and for the sake of Christ—the divine Spirit respects God's work of creation—and deals with us as rational, moral, free creatures. And so by his sanctifying work, he more and more subdues our wills, enlightens our understandings, purifies our hearts, enables and inclines us to love and to enjoy God—performing, until the day of Jesus Christ, the good work which he hath begun in us.[3] And yet when we consider that in our flesh dwelleth no good thing, and that even when to will is present with us, we see another law in our members warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members;[4] we can easily understand the nature of the peril that our progress in holiness may be slow, interrupted, and marked by many backslidings: and the reason why it can never be perfectly achieved until this mortal shall have put on immortality—this corruptible shall have put on incorruption.[5] And this is the very method of God, in all his works. One degree after another, whether of grace or glory; one exaltation after another in endless dispensations—cycle after cycle—higher and higher for evermore. Though we must say of all our righteousnesses, that they are but as filthy rags, and though we must feel that sin doth so easily beset us; yet we run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.[6] Nor can we, without denying the faith and outraging the unchangeable love of God, distrust his promise—nay, his covenant—nay, his oath—to prepare his children for their infinite inheritance, and bring them to its eternal enjoyment.[7]

[1] Gal., v. 17. [2] Eph., iv. 23. [3] Phil., i. 6; Psal. li. 10; Ezek., xxxvi. 26.
[4] Rom., vii. 18, 23. [5] 1 Cor., xv. 54. [6] Isa., lxiv. 6; Heb., xii. 1, 2.
[7] Jer., xxxi. 3; Heb., vi. 17, 20; xiii. 20, 21; John, x. 28.

4. This general work of divine grace on our renewed nature, has a peculiar relation to particular graces of the Spirit ; especially to Repentance, to Faith, and to the Love of God shed abroad in the soul. It is not possible for us to conceive how a free, spiritual being, can hate and shun any thing as sinful, except as it discerns truly the sinfulness of the thing ; nor how it can hate and shun it more and more, except as it more and more discerns truly the exceeding sinfulness of sin. In like manner, such a being, in order to love and cleave to what is good, must discern truly the goodness of the object ; and to increase in its love and desire for any thing, it must increase in the clearness of its perception that it is good. But this is the nature of the double office of Repentance : which out of a just apprehension of the true nature of sin—hates it and turns from it ; and out of a just apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, turns to God with a set purpose of heart after a new obedience.[1] Except therefore in the continual exercise of one or other office of the grace of Repentance—there is no possibility of growth in grace—and therefore none of our Sanctification. We see in this how futile it is to suppose, that we can ever attain sinless perfection in this life : for surely the blessed Lord had never commanded all his people, always, to pray for the forgiveness of their daily transgressions—if they committed none ; any more than to pray for daily bread if they need none. We see also, how our growth in grace must necessarily be gradual and constant, in proportion as God withdraws the veil which obscures the true nature of sin, and discloses its hatefulness more and more to the renewed soul ; and in proportion as he discloses, on the other hand, his own beauty and excellence and glory more and more ; and in proportion, also, as he quickens us in the power of our new life, of which both as to its reality and its actual state, the grace whose use I am illustrating is a manifestation so constant and so decisive. In like manner, as the whole conception of grace towards us, involves continually and fundamentally the idea of the divine Mediator between God and man ; so every idea we can form of Sanctification, is relative to him—and all growth in grace by us, is some increase in our likeness to him—some augmentation of the power of his life in us. But Faith in him, while it is the only conceivable method of our spiritual union with him, is at the

[1] Acts, xxvi. 18.

same time the first and the most constant manifestation of our new birth, and the channel through which all life and grace that come immediately from him to us, are communicated to the soul. In proportion, therefore, to the strength, the simplicity, the purity and activity of our Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, must necessarily be the power of that new life which we share with the Lord from heaven ; and in the same degree must be the stedfastness of our growth in grace, and the final completeness of our Sanctification. It is not merely a figure of speech to say, that Faith is not only the evidence of things not seen, but is also the substance of things hoped for.[1] For grace and truth come by Jesus Christ ; and of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace ; grace in all his children responsive to the boundless grace in him, in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.[2] It is wonderful to observe how these first and simplest graces of the Spirit—these earliest manifestations of the life of God in the soul of man—are made effectual unto the very highest attainments the soul is capable of making. Repentance toward God and Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ—the conditions of salvation itself—which are as familiar to the very humblest child of God, as the path in which the wayfaring man habitually walks, is to him ; are nevertheless, the very means by which every difficulty is solved, every obstacle surmounted, and the highest form of spiritual life finally attained. The result of this growth in grace, as I have shown is general, not partial ; it is the Sanctification of the whole man—and it is, at every step of the process, a work involving the whole man. Nevertheless, there is a special and infallible mark of the progress, the particular stage, and the result of this great work of grace. He who exercises Faith in Jesus Christ, proves thereby that he is born of God ; so he who loves God supremely, proves thereby that he is sanctified. The very end of the circumcision of the heart by God is, that we may love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul.[3] And the first and great commandment both of the Law and the Gospel is couched in those words.[4] The very end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.[5] Faith itself works by love :[6] and so working both purifies the heart and overcomes the world.

[1] Heb, xi. 1. [2] John, i. 16, 17; Col., ii. 9. [3] Deut., xxx. 6.
[4] Deut., vi. 5; Matt., xxii. 37. [5] 1 Tim., i. 5. [6] Gal., v. 6.

But there is no need of proving by numerous texts that which belongs to the very structure of revealed religion. The first relation between God and man was a relation of boundless mutual love : the second relation is one of unalterable love of God to his elect—and of pollution and hate on their part : the third is still love on the part of God—and love on the part of the regenerate sinner, commencing with his new birth, and increasing with his growth in grace : the last is the consummation of God's love to man, and the restoration of the glorified man to a love for God, of which the primeval man had no ability, no conception. It is the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost,[1] which is at once the test of our actual relation to him, the measure of our enjoyment of him, and the distinctive element in our fitness and our ability to serve him. Beyond all this, it is immediately relevant both to the nature and extent of our infinite inheritance ; for the things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, are the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.[2]

5. I have pointed out in a previous chapter the ordinary efforts and experience of the human soul, in the matter of our Effectual Calling of God anterior to our Regeneration ; and now we are to consider very briefly the peculiar nature of that force, and the form of it, which the new creature is able to put forth in its own gradual Sanctification. It is manifest that we can put forth no force concurring with any outward act of God towards us, and preceding the finished act of God ; and that with regard to all of them, as, for example, his act justifying, and his act adopting us, the utmost ability of man is some act responsive to the gracious act of God, performed after it, and performed in consequence of a gracious ability previously conferred by God ; as, for example, our receiving the imputed righteousness of Christ, by faith—which faith is the result of our previous regeneration by the Holy Ghost. The impotence of man to the change of his own nature, as well as the peculiar nature of his passivity in that great spiritual change which the Scriptures call his new birth ; have been sufficiently explained in another place. But now that we are born again, the case does not stand exactly as it did. We can indeed do nothing to create ourselves ; but being already created with capacities competent

[1] Rom., v. 5. [2] 1 Cor., ii. 9.

to the greatest undertakings, and whose very nature it is to be enlarged and perfected by use ; it is the reverse of true to allege that culture produces no lasting effect—that effort has no permanent result ; or, on the other hand, that imbecile indifference, voluntary ignorance, and sinful self-indulgence, leave no traces on our noblest powers. Thus the endeavours of the new creature to liberate itself from native pollution, and to increase in conformity to God, are contemplated in every divine command and encouragement tending to our growth in grace ; and, either expressly or impliedly, the active co-operation of the renewed soul seems to be always recognized in the process of its own sanctification. The number of such Scriptures is very great. Thus the Apostle Paul says to the saints at Colosse, that although Christ be all and in all,—Ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.[1] And still more distinctly to the saints at Philippi, Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do, of his good pleasure.*[2] Nothing can be more decisive than this. The saints are exhorted to address themselves to the work of their personal salvation : the temper of mind in which they should do this is that awe becoming him, with whom they have to do, and that solicitude appropriate to the vast interest at stake ; the encouragement offered to them is God's working in them in all things—for willing and doing embrace every thing ; the result is the total product of his grace. Practically, so great is the influence of spiritual things upon the soul that is earnestly engaged with them, that the habitual complexion of our spiritual experience is taken from the objects we habitually contemplate. And so it is said, We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.[3] We ought not to forget for a moment the magnitude of the work which is to be accomplished, nor the perfection of it

[1] Col., iii. 9, 11.

* Ὑπερ της ευδοκιας: if *his* be supplied, according to the English, one sense is given: but if *ὑμων* be supplied, a different and possibly better sense, making the phrase mean—*præter desiderium:* thus, *for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do, beyond your longing desire:* which is the apparent sense of the Greek, if nothing be supplied.

[2] Phil., ii. 12, 13.

[3] 2 Cor., iii. 18.

when it shall be fully done. The divine nature condescended to take human nature into eternal union with itself, in the person of the Son of God; and human nature is to be elevated to eternal participation of the divine nature, in the person of every redeemed sinner. A single act of the Son of God, assuming human nature, perfected that union of God and man. But what innumerable acts, and how amazing and multiplied in the case of every child of God, before that participation is completely achieved by them all! And in every one, after what grace, and mercy, and love of God; after what anguish on account of sin, what efforts to subdue it, what conflicts, what victories, what hosannahs in the highest!

III.—1. Having now endeavoured to explain, under the first general division, the relation of Sanctification to the plan of salvation, and under the second, the nature of it as exhibited by some of its most distinguishing characteristics; it is necessary to enquire more particularly by what means it is carried on in the soul, and in what manner it is related to the Godhead as the author of it. No terms are more familiar to the people of God than *Means of Grace*—means, that is, whereby the grace of God is made effectual to the salvation of sinners. And the complete provision of those means of grace by God, and their universal applicability and use in saving men, and the intimate connection between them and the whole course of the divine life in man, furnish a distinctive proof that the supernatural method of divine grace and salvation is not miraculous, in any proper sense; while, at the same time, the manifest and declared inefficacy of all these means, merely of themselves, to produce the effects which follow from their use, is an equally distinctive proof that the system of grace and salvation to which they appertain, is not natural, in any proper sense. It is, therefore, both absurd in itself and irreverent toward God, for us to devise other means than those appointed by him; for us to neglect the diligent use of all those means he has commanded, and for us to rely on those he has appointed, otherwise than in the way, to the extent, and for the purpose, revealed by him. Amongst the benefits of the Covenant of Redemption, those which are the most nearly connected with the means of grace, are those which relate to our first engrafting into Christ, and those which relate to the subsequent increase of the power of our new life within us. And between

these there is this wide difference, that in the former case they are addressed to the natural man, to whom they are foolishness,[1] for the purpose of awakening, enlightening, and quickening him; while, in the latter case, they are addressed to the new man, to whom they are very precious, for the purpose of enabling him to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.[2] It is, therefore, in this very matter of our Sanctification that the means appropriate to that great and constant work of grace, are at once most obviously needful and most generally fruitful.

2. The word of God is the great means of the sanctification of penitent and believing sinners. Our divine Redeemer said to his Apostles, as he and they sat together after the last supper was ended, Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.[3] And when his discourse to his Apostles was ended, addressing himself to his Father, he said, concerning those whom the Father had given him, Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.[4] Having respect to human nature in its absolute essence, and in all its known qualities and modes of operation, we are not able to conceive how the understanding of a renewed soul could increase in divine knowledge, its conscience increase in divine sanctity, its will increase in conformity to the will of God, otherwise than by the instrumentality of divine truth; while we are also unable to conceive how it could fail to do so, under the application of divine truth to it with the power of God. And such, in both respects, is the universal practical result. And such is the uniform and multiplied testimony of the sacred Scriptures.[5] Indeed, the very thing which the grace of God that bringeth salvation has taught all men is, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zeal-

[1] 1 Cor., ii. 14. [2] 2 Pet., iii. 18. [3] John, xv. 3.
[4] John, xv. 17–19.
[5] Ps. cxix. 142–151; 1 Cor., vi. 11; Eph., v. 26; 1 Tim., iv. 5; 1 Pet., i. 22.

ous of good works.[1] And this embraces, equally, all holy Scriptures which indiscriminately—the whole of it—is not only the instrument of our Sanctification, but the rule of our New Obedience, able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith that is in Christ Jesus. For all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.[2]

3. In a strict sense, whatever can with propriety be called a means of grace is implicitly contained in the declaration, that the word of God is the instrument of our Sanctification. No doubt the divine truth itself has an efficacy in this way peculiar to itself; and that all the means revealed in the Scriptures for making divine truth effectual, have an efficacy peculiar to each one. But that these are means at all, depends, as to us, upon the single fact that God has appointed them, which fact can be ascertained only by the testimony of the word itself. The whole of these are ordinances of God, not excepting even the divine Word. The chief of them are, the Sacraments of the Covenant of Redemption, instituted by Christ in his church to signify and seal to his followers the benefits of his mediation:[3] the Sabbath day which God blessed and sanctified from the foundation of the world, and afterwards embodied in the ten commandments which contain a divine summary of the Moral Law, obligatory upon all mankind:[4] the religious worship of God, both public and private, with the preaching of the word, the offering of prayer, and the singing of the praises of God:[5] to which, in a lower sense, are to be added Alms, Fasting, and Lawful Vows:[6] nor should the exercise of Discipline, so emphatically commanded by God, be overlooked.[7] Very nearly connected, therefore, with our growth in grace, and immediately relevant to our Sanctification, both as means of promoting it, and as manifestations of it, are the New Obedience, Good Works, and the Spiritual Warfare. Any just consideration of these immense resources of God's church and people, ought to fill our hearts with awe and joy. They have all been provided by Christ for the gathering and perfecting his

[1] Titus, ii. 11–14.
[2] 2 Tim., iii. 15–17.
[3] Matt., xxvi., 26, 27; xxviii. 19.
[4] Gen., ii. 3; Exod., xx. 8–11.
[5] Deut., xii. 32; 2 Tim., iv. 2; Phil., iv. 5; Col., iii. 16.
[6] 1 John, iii. 17, 18; Matt., xii. 15; Eccl., v. 4, 5.
[7] Heb., xiii. 17; 1 Thess., v. 12, 13.

saints, in this life, to the end of the world: and it is he who by his presence, and his Spirit, according to his promise, makes them all effectual.[1] The narrowness of my limits, and the strictness of my method, do not permit me to enlarge upon any of them here: which is of the less consequence, as they will all receive further consideration as we advance in the disclosure of the subjective effects of the Knowledge of God.

IV.—1. And now we reach the climax of this matter, in reaching the author of all these wonderful provisions for a work of grace, not less wonderful than they; the adorable God, from whose bosom all grace flows, and with it all power that makes grace effectual. This divine work of Sanctification, so peculiar in itself as compared with other benefits of the Covenant of Redemption, brings the soul into peculiar relations with the Godhead. The application to the Elect of the benefits of the Covenant of Redemption, is generally so accomplished that the particular act or work we are considering may be seen to have very special reference, often exclusive reference, to a particular operation of the Godhead: as in Election, the love, and in Justification, the sentence of the Father; in Regeneration, inspiration, and the whole testimony borne to Christ, the work of the Holy Ghost; in Incarnation, satisfaction, intercession, and the final sentence of acquttial, the work of the Son. In the counsel of God, the covenant resulting from it, and the decree founded on it—to speak according to our weakness—the two former suggest all the Persons of the Godhead, while the latter suggests the undivided essence—Jehovah; on the one side, the plurality in unity—on the other the unity of that plurality: simplicity of essence—plurality of Persons—unity. This is the aspect of the divine existence, connected with our salvation in its foundation. And this same aspect of the divine existence becomes manifest again, as that salvation is being consummated in the complete sanctification of those elect, concerning whom were that counsel, that covenant, and that decree. In the intermediate divine acts connected with our salvation, the distinct work of the several Persons of the Godhead keeps an aspect of the divine existence corresponding to that manner of working, continually before the mind. Concerning our sanctification, the Godhead in its unity, and each Person of the Godhead separately, are distinctly

[1] Isa., lix. 20, 21; Eph., iv. 11–13.

exhibited by the Scriptures as concurring it in a manner peculiar to this great and crowning work of grace ; and this is illustrated by their relations to that eternal covenant—the consummation of whose grace, and the commencement of whose glory, Sanctification itself marks as already approached.

2. To put off the old man—to be renewed in the spirit of our mind—to put on the new man :[1] this, as we have seen, is the divine description of the progress of every one who has truly learned Christ, who has earnestly commenced a career of righteousness and true holiness. It is not that the old man is put off first, and then the spirit of the mind is renewed, and then the new man is put on : which, in every respect, is impossible. But it is, that being renewed in the spirit of the mind, simultaneously with that renewal, and as the simultaneous effects of it, the old man dies on one hand, and the new man arises on the other ; both results being the unavoidable effects of the spiritual renewal. And then as the power of this central and pervading life increases, or is itself renewed or advanced, it follows unavoidably and simultaneously that the putting off the old man on one side, and the putting on the new man on the other, also proceeds. The rising of the sun necessarily and simultaneously chases away the darkness, by diffusing light; and as he ascends in his glorious career, both effects proceed together. Thus our sanctification is general, and is total, and yet is both imperfect in this state of being, and certain to be perfect in the next. Now the power which produces these results, is the power which renewed us in the spirit of our mind, and which augments the vital force of the new existence thus communicated to us. The nature of this progress, and the means which infinite power condescends to employ in this method of nourishing and advancing this life of God in man, have been explained. It is the power itself of which we now enquire. Manifestly, it transcends all ability of our own—all power in the universe of which we have any knowledge, except that of God ; so manifestly, that the effects are precisely opposite to the nature of all known power, except that of God ; and never occur, are never conceived of, except in causal connection with the power of God. This growth in grace is not a new creation in the sense that Regeneration is, any more than natural growth from infancy to manhood is a succession of births ; a

[1] Eph., iv. 20, 24.

truth that may help to explain to us the widely different effects of the means of grace upon renewed and unrenewed souls. It is no doubt true, that reformation and increased purity of outward life follow growth in grace; but that these follow it merely as effects of the inward power,—proofs of the reality of the inward transformation, would never have been questioned, except in order to deny the pollution of human nature, and to deny the power of God which removes it.

3. That divine power is ascribed, in the first place, to God considered absolutely. Infinite holiness is the source of finite holiness. Thus saith the Lord God—(*Adonai Jehovah*)*—I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord (Jehovah)† that sanctify them.[1] And the ascription of this work to Jehovah, is connected with the most explicit recognition of earnest co-operation on our part. Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy; for I am the Lord your God.‡ And ye shall keep my statutes and do them: I am the Lord (Jehovah) which sanctify you.[2] And this use is found very commonly in the New Testament Scriptures: thus, And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly.[3] In like manner the Father is often declared to be the author of our Sanctification. Thus Jude addresses his epistle to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ.[4] And Paul declares that it is the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.[5] And perhaps the most emphatic statement in the Scriptures, that the word of God is the instrument of our Sanctification, is made by the Saviour in earnest petition to the Father, to sanctify the elect through his truth.[6] As to the Son, his relation to our Sanctification is most express, both in that he merited and purchased it for us, and in that he applies it to us. Thus, Paul states that Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word, that he might present it to himself, a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.[7] For, the very reason why he, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, was, that we might be made the right-

* אֲדֹנָי יְהוִֹה † יְהוָֹה— [1] Ezek., xx. 5, 12. ‡ יְהוִֹה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
[2] Levit., xx. 7, 8. [3] 1 Thess., v. 23. [4] Jude, 1. [5] Col., i. 12.
[6] John, xvii. 17. [7] Eph., v. 25–27.

eousness of God in him.[1] And while it is of God that we are in Christ Jesus, this is so accomplished, that Christ Jesus is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.[2] And with reference to the Holy Ghost, according to the œconomy of the divine operation, every part of the internal work of our restoration and salvation appertains in a special manner to him ; and amongst the rest this is expressly declared concerning our Sanctification. Thus when speaking, at the same time, of all three Persons of the Trinity, and explaining the relation of each one to our salvation, the work of sanctifying us is particularly appropriated to the Holy Ghost. After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost ; which was shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour ; that being justified by his grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.[3] Our obligation to give thanks always to God, for our brethren beloved of the Lord, is declared to be, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth ; whereunto ye were called by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.[4] It appears therefore that the uncreated holiness which is of the essence of the Godhead, and which therefore appertains equally and alike to each Person of the Trinity—while it was the basis of the peculiar form of righteousness brought in and wrought out by Christ ; is also the ultimate source of the created holiness wrought in the elect, as the consummation of divine grace in this life. By consequence, the power competent to produce and perfect that holiness in the heirs of God, is common to each person in the Godhead, and to the Godhead considered absolutely. And finally, according to the Scriptures this amazing power is actually and continually exercised by them all, in a work of sanctifying grace in all renewed souls ; to their unspeakable comfort, edification, and advancement ; to the infinite glory of the Triune God ; and, as we shall immediately see, to the highest exaltation of the work of Christ ! And so the end, as well as the beginning, and all the progress of our salvation, shows that the whole is absolutely responsive to the revealed mode of the divine

[1] 2 Cor., v. 21. [2] 1 Cor., i. 30. [3] Titus, iii. 4–7. [4] Titus, ii. 13, 14.

existence ; that the apparent obscurity of any portion of God's word, and all its alleged inconsistencies, are founded on nothing but our own shallow ignorance of that which it imports us so deeply to know ; and that the more thorough and the more exalted our views are both of God's nature and grace, and of the whole work of salvation divinely accomplished in us, the more certain they are to be true in themselves and realized in us.

4. The divine concurrence of the Persons of the Godhead in the Covenant of Redemption, was such as to produce a plan of salvation with an established œconomy, as between those divine Persons : an administration—so to speak—not of the whole by each person—but of a certain part by each, with the constant presence and concurrence of all : as has been heretofore fully explained. In the work of Sanctification, the same thing occurs. It is not the whole of Sanctification by each, but it is the Sanctification of the whole man by the sanctifying power of each Person of the Trinity, and by the Godhead considered absolutely —in each case with reference to the œconomy and administration established in the covenant itself—and with reference to the presence and concurrence of each. The peculiarity in Sanctification is, that whereas in the other benefits of the covenant, the work or act of each Person is distinct, and is to a result precise and distinguishable from every other result ; in this benefit, the work of each Person is to the same result, namely, one and a complete Sanctification of the whole man ; and in that one complete result it is not distinguishable, nor capable of being realized in thought, what portion of the perfect holiness of the sanctified person appertains to one or to another divine Person. We can distinctly say we are purchased by the blood of Christ, we are regenerated by the power of the Holy Ghost, we are justified by the sentence of the Father. Of our Sanctification, we must speak in another way ; it is a work of grace accomplished by Jehovah—the Father—the Son—and the Holy Ghost—in those upon whom all separate and divine acts and works, preliminary to it, have been performed. But the particular object of this statement is, to point out that this wonderful working in our Sanctification is not promiscuous, nor yet total of each : but is, according to the divine œconomy and administration of the Godhead and the persons thereof, manifested in the Covenant of Redemption. Concerning the Godhead considered absolutely, and concerning the

Father and the Holy Spirit; what has been said, is perhaps sufficient for this place. Concerning the divine Redeemer, a few words of further explanation are necessary.

5. The elect were chosen by God to salvation through Sanctification of the Spirit; before the foundation of the world they were chosen in Christ that they should be holy, and they were predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son.[1] This Sanctification of the Spirit is his powerful operation applying the death and resurrection of Christ unto them—thereby causing them to die to sin and to live to righteousness—renewing the whole man in the image of God.[2] It is the virtue of the death of Christ, and the virtue of the resurrection of Christ, applied to us by the Holy Ghost—and the virtue of the risen and exalted Christ passing from him to us—which require us to say, not only that Christ purchases our Sanctification as a benefit of the covenant, but that in a still stricter sense he is the author of it. The position covers the last act of his humiliation—the first of his exaltation. He purged our sins by his own blood.[3] How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your consciences from dead works, to serve the living God.[4] He has not only redeemed us and reconciled us to God by his blood;[5] but that blood cleanseth us from all sin—in it our sins are washed away, and by it we overcome all things.[6] The will of God concerning our Sanctification, which Christ came into the world to execute, and by which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all; was so accomplished, that by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.[7] And the Scriptures are equally decisive concerning the power of the resurrection of Christ, and the virtue of the life of Christ imparted to us. Being made conformable to the death of Christ, we know him, and the power of his resurrection, as well as the fellowship of his sufferings; and so we may apprehend that for which also we are apprehended of Christ Jesus.[8] At present, we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God; but Christ, who is our life, will appear again, and then shall we also appear with him in glory.[9] Presently, mortality will be swallowed up of life; and he who hath wrought us for this is God; and in the

[1] 2 Thess., ii. 13; Eph., i. 4; Rom., viii. 29. [2] Rom., vi. 1–12.
[3] Heb., i. 3. [4] Heb., ix. 14. [5] Rom., v. 5, 10; Rev., v. 9.
[6] Rev., i. 5; xii. 11; 1 John, i. 7. [7] Heb., x. 10, 14. [8] Phil., iii. 10, 12.
[9] Col., iii. 3, 4.

meantime he has given unto us the earnest of his Spirit.[1] Planted together in the likeness of the death of Christ, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection : if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him.[2] And we can truly say, I am crucified with Christ ; nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.[3] In all these passages, the particular point elucidated, is our participation with Christ, both in what he endured for sin, and in his absolute triumph over it along with death, and the grave, and hell : and the consequent participation with him, and from him, of the virtue of both, and of the mind and Spirit in which he accomplished all. Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith.[4] The direct effect of this on us, is our increasing Sanctification ; and this is the way of Christ's direct participation in our Sanctification ; and this is in exact accordance with his relation to the Covenant of Redemption, and to the œconomy of that covenant, as between the Persons of the Trinity. What is not disclosed specially here, and what remains for each one to supply for himself, is an adequate conception of the sufferings and of the triumph of Christ ; in order that we may have an adequate conception of what passes, and ought to pass, in our own souls—as their Sanctification is advanced by increasing conformity both to the death and to the resurrection of Christ. The number is not great of those in whom this sublime work is sufficiently regarded, or its fruits sufficiently tasted ; and so not many understand fully what passed in Gethsemane and at Calvary—without which it is idle to expect that we can fully appreciate Christ's triumph over the powers of hell and the horror of eternal death. It is only when we turn to the Lord with all our heart, that the veil is taken from it.[5]

6. The completeness of the Plan of Salvation seems to be absolute. The adaptedness of all its parts to each other, and to their own special end—and the adaptedness of the whole and of every part, to the great end of all, the eradication of sin and misery ; exhibits a subject, the greatest, the most intricate, and the most remote of all—in a manner so precise and clear ; that the sacred Scriptures, even if they had no grace and no mercy to offer to us personally, might justly challenge the very highest

[1] 2 Cor., v. 4, 5. [2] Rom., vi. 6, 8. [3] Gal., ii. 20. [4] Heb., xii. 2. [5] 2 Cor., iii. 16.

place as the most stupendous monument of sublime and successful thought. What then ought we to think of them, when all this glorious intelligence is merely tributary to our salvation? The end of this infinite completeness, only to pour into our polluted and thoughtless hearts, inexhaustible supplies of grace—that we may be extricated from a condition utterly hopeless without that grace—and be brought to a condition unspeakably blessed to us and glorious to God? Yet this is the overwhelming conclusion to which every just consideration of them forces us to come; the conclusion to which the imperfect disclosure which has now been attempted, of a single point in this divine system, wholly compels us. In this deep conviction, therefore, and as the conclusion of all that has now been advanced, I venture to define, that Sanctification is a benefit of the Covenant of Redemption—being a work of grace, on the part of the Triune God, wherein the elect who have been Effectually Called, Regenerated, Justified, and Adopted, are, through the virtue of the death and resurrection of Christ, by the indwelling of the Word and Spirit, through the use of the divine ordinances, and by the power of God within them, enabled more and more to die unto sin, to be renewed in the spirit of their mind, and to live unto righteousness, in an increasing conformity to the image of God, to his great glory, and their great growth in holiness.

CHAPTER XII.

COMMUNION WITH CHRIST IN GRACE COMPLETE: COMMUNION WITH CHRIST IN GLORY BEGUN.

I. 1. Conditions of our Discipleship.—2. Nature of the Kingdom of God.—3. Communion with Christ in Grace: Origin, Progress, and End thereof.—4. Communion with Christ in Glory: First Fruits thereof, in this Life.—II. 1. Distinction in the Effects of Communion with Christ in Glory.—2. First Fruits of Glory enjoyed in this Life.—3. Origin, Growth, and Reality of these First Fruits.—4. Nature and Extent of Fitness for Eternal Life—and of inward enjoyment of God.—5. The Evidence which the Soul may obtain and rest upon.—6. Spiritual Weakness—Distrust—Doubt—Indifference.—7. Self-Delusion—Backsliding—Perseverance—Assurance.—III. 1. The Saints are allowed, in this Life, a foretaste of Heaven: Earnest of the Spirit.—2. A sense of God's Love: Peace of Conscience: Joy in the Holy Ghost: Rejoicing in Hope of the Glory of God.—3. In Life, Death, the Separate State after Death, Resurrection, Transfiguration, Believers have Communion with Christ.—4. Relation of Death to the Saints—and to the Triumph of the Mediatorial Kingdom.—5. Communion with Christ in Glory—at the Resurrection and in the Judgment.—6. Progress of this Enquiry: and the Point reached.

I.—1. Whosoever will come after me, said the Lord, emphatically to the people whom he had collected unto him with his disciples, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.[1] These are the unalterable conditions of our discipleship. Whoever will do these things, is the disciple of Christ. Whoever refuses to do them is none of his. Nothing less will suffice: nothing more is possible. Nor is his yoke a hard yoke: nor his burden a heavy burden. Far otherwise. No one has ever tasted and seen, who has not found that the Lord was precious; who has not seen that it was better to be a doorkeeper in his house, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. How blessed then are they who trust him, and find a day in his courts better than a thousand! For the Lord God is a sun and a shield; the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee![2]

[1] Matt., vi. 24; Mark, viii. 34; Luke, ix. 23.

[2] Psalm lxxxiv. 11, 12.

2. In the bestowment of the grace of God nothing is barren, nothing remains unfruitful. Even in his providence—how much more in his grace richly bestowed on his children—all things work—all work together—all inwork mutually one upon another: so that besides accomplishing that which is its immediate design, every thing becomes in its effect, a new power, constantly extending in depth and breadth. There is no mark of the life of God in the soul more decisive than this: no characteristic of it more clearly disclosed by him, who is the author and finisher of our faith. A woman took leaven and hid it in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. A man took a grain of mustard seed, and cast it into his garden; and it grew and waxed a great tree: and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it. This is the way in which God works: this is the very nature of the Kingdom of God.[1] This is the process and result of the working of divine grace in the soul of the believer: one of the mysteries of the kingdom, hid from the foundation of the world, from all carnal understanding: plainly revealed by the Great Teacher, and clearly understood by all to whom it is given to know those heavenly mysteries.[2]

3. The infinite goodness of God, directed by wisdom, and sustained by power infinite as itself, when addressed to the problem of delivering the universe from the reign of sin, resulted in that purpose of the divine will which finds its expression in the Covenant of Redemption. This is the form in which, speaking after the manner of men, the first result is expressed. The practical outworking of this covenant, is exhibited in the entire mediatorial work of Christ, and the entire application thereof to the whole universe, and especially in its application to elect sinners of our fallen race by the Holy Ghost. In this process they become united to Christ by Faith through grace. For Christ has purchased redemption for the elect: and all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him are amen, unto the glory of God by us.[3] And all for whom Christ has purchased redemption, are made partakers of the benefits he has purchased for them, by the application thereof to them by the Holy Ghost; which is begun in their Effectual Calling, wherein they are united inseparably to Christ. Thus united to him, they have communion with him

[1] Luke, xiii. 18–22.
[2] Matt., xiii. 11; xi. 25–27.
[3] Heb., ix. 12; 2 Cor., i. 20.

in grace and in glory. And thus two more results are successively reached—each following the other—and all three bound together, and all that will follow knit to all these, and to each other, by the infinite force of the divine method which pervades them all with a living power. For having received, in this union with Christ, a divine Regeneration ; the communion in grace which we enjoy with him is our partaking of the virtue of his mediation, in our Justification, Adoption, Sanctification, and whatever else in this life manifests our union with him.[1] The end of all is the complete fitness of the children of God for eternal life, and their assured possession of it.[2]

4. They whose fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, are they whom the Father has given to the Son, and concerning whom the will of the Son declared to the Father is, that they should be with him where he is, that they may behold his glory.[3] It is, therefore, not in grace only, but also in glory, that they have communion with the Lord Jesus. Nor is it only in another state of being that they will participate of the glory of Christ ; for in this life the first fruits of that glory are bestowed on them. As members of Christ, they are interested in that glory of which he is fully possessed; for God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved,) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus : that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus.[4] And here we have exhibited to us in forms which struggle to make manifest their power and fulness, another of those mighty inworkings of which I have spoken ; another of those glorious manifestations of the vital power of every part of the grace of God. For just as they who are effectually called are made partakers in succession of the unspeakable blessings and benefits of Regeneration, Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification ; so they who have been brought that far in the Way of Life, find that other blessings, and amongst them some of the most precious benefits of the Covenant of Redemption, accompany and flow from these ; and that as the result of all, the confines of grace overlap the con-

[1] 1 Cor., i. 30 ; Rom., viii. 30.
[2] Eph., i. *passim*.
[3] John, xvii. 24; 1 John, i. 3.
[4] Eph., ii. 4–7.

fines of glory. It is this which we must consider more particularly, in concluding the enquiry to which this Book is devoted, into the nature, origin, progress, and completion of the life of God in man, during his mortal state—his state of begun recovery.

II.—1. Those blessings and benefits of the Covenant of Redemption which, exceeding the effects of our communion with Christ in his grace, are the product of our communion with him in his glory; are subject to a very precise distinction, founded on the periods of their bestowment. During the present life, where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty: and all who as with open face behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.[1] At death the body returns to earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.[2] And so when the penitent malefactor dying by the side of the dying Saviour, said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom: Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.[3] But Paradise is the place where God manifests himself in unspeakable glory. For it was to it that Paul was caught up, calling it the third heaven, and not being able to tell whether he was in the body, or out of the body, heard unspeakable words worthy of all glorying, but which it is not lawful for a man to utter.[4] And John informs us, that Paradise is the place in the midst of which is the tree of Life, of which the glorified Redeemer gives to every victorious saint to eat.[5] There is, concerning the future state of man nothing more clearly revealed, than that the soul of the impenitent passes to hell at death, and the soul of the believer, when released from the body, passes immediately to the presence and fruition of the Lord; delivered wholly, and blessed and glorious beyond all human conception.[6] And then at the resurrection and the day of judgment, the communion of saints with Christ in glory will at last be perfected.[7] We have, therefore, the means of determining, not only the relations of those states which result from our communion with Christ in grace, to those which result from our communion with him in glory; but we have the means also of determining

[1] 2 Cor., iii. 17, 18. [2] Eccl., xii. 7. [3] Luke, xxiii. 42, 43.
[4] 2 Cor., xii. 1–5. [5] Rev., ii. 7. [6] Luke, xvi. 19–31.
[7] 1 Cor., xv. 50–58; Matt., xv. 31–46.

the relations of those states, which occur at different stages of our communion with him in glory, to each other.

2. There is, even in this life, a certain anticipated realization of deserved doom, and of the vengeance of God, and of the fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God. A certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. Nor are such things unsuitable to those who have trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing, and done despite unto the Spirit of grace.[1] Cain bewailed his punishment as greater than he could bear; and Judas, full of horror at the thought of the innocent blood he had betrayed, laid violent hands upon himself; and what multitudes, to a greater or less extent, encounter the shadow of eternal death before they incur its endless doom! No one questions the reality of such things—no one perceives in them any occasion for surprise that the death which sin cannot avoid bringing forth, should manifest in this terrible manner the power of its working. Why should it be thought strange that they who seek for glory, honour, and immortality, should receive, not only eternal life in another world, but glory, honour, and peace in this world; when it is manifest that tribulation and anguish, indignation and wrath, are rendered to every soul of man that doeth evil?[2] Assuredly they for whom an undefiled inheritance is laid up in heaven, and who are already invested with a perfect title to the whole of it, and are wrought, through infinite grace, to a fitness for the enjoyment of it: will not be denied by the King of kings and Lord of lords, whose sons and heirs they are, a portion of the first fruits of their own immeasurable inheritance to support, to bless, yea, and to adorn them, as they struggle forward to their Father's throne!

3. After considering the nature of faith, of the righteousness which is by faith, and of the relation of both to our salvation, the Apostle Paul proceeds thus: Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope;

[1] Heb., x. 27–29.

[2] Rom., ii. 6–10.

and hope maketh not ashamed ; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.[1] See this distinct, and wonderful process ! Justified by faith—peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ : through faith in whom, also, access to the holiest of all—access therefore into this grace wherein we stand fast : rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. Nor is this all ; rejoicing in tribulation, knowing that tribulation, patience, experience, and hope, follow in succession, each the product of the one preceding, and the hope thus wrought out unfailing : as the great result, and as a great cause too, the love of God copiously poured into our hearts through the Holy Ghost given to us ! And so a perpetual growth in grace and in the knowledge of God, a trustful and joyful fruition of the glory of God—and assurance of God's love, and the indwelling of the Divine Spirit, are the satisfying portion, and the habitual state of the soul. It is hard to say whether it is more wonderful that so much, and of such a nature, can be fully and clearly expressed in so few and simple words ; or that any who have a deep interest in such things, and a sincere desire to understand them, should err concerning them. Continual increase of grace—the certainty of perseverance therein to the end—and the settled conviction therein of eternal life ; are the assured portion of such as, in this life, live near enough to God to enjoy intimate communion with him. These things, says the Apostle John, have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God ; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe—(or rather, ye who do believe)—on the name of the Son of God.[2] And in another place, Hereby we do know that we know him—(who is the propitiation of our sins)—if we keep his commandments.[3] And again, He that keepeth his commandments—(that is, God's)—dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us :[4] and he had just said that the special commandment of God is, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another. And that Spirit of God which he hath given to us, and which attests his abiding in us ; even that Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God ; and if children,

[1] Rom., v. 1–5.
[2] 1 John, v. 13.
[3] 1 John, ii. 2, 3.
[4] 1 John, iii. 24.

then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.[1]

4. After all it may be asked, and is continually asked—What is the precise nature and extent of this inward fitness for eternal life—and of this inward enjoyment of God? The former question, it is obvious, covers the entire effect, and combined result, of our Effectual Calling, Regeneration, Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification. Supposing them to have occurred, the fitness for eternal life which is enquired after, is the sum of their influence upon us—neither more nor less. And on the other hand, it is not conceivable that they should be what I think I have shown they are, and that they should occur and operate as I think I have shown they do, without producing that very fitness which is enquired for, as their necessary result; a fitness for eternal life, resulting from an actual conformity to God, and that in the highest degree of which each human being is capable, in our mortal state, and under our actual circumstances. To question this fitness for eternal life of those who resemble God, is tantamount to questioning the fitness of God to be God: and has always been reckoned by him amongst the most heinous insults to his divine majesty. It was because of this outrage in Moab and Seir, saying, Behold the house of Judah is like unto all the heathen: that God blotted them out from being remembered among the nations.[2] As to the second question, the one concerning the nature and extent of our enjoying of God in this life; it is obvious that if we admit that a soul can be born again, and can live in the flesh by the life of the Lord from heaven imparted to it; it is not possible to doubt that thus created anew, and thus living, this divine life in man—this new creation—can be nourished, can be developed, can be consummated, as really as any other form of vital existence: and that this must occur according to the nature of the life itself—the means brought to bear upon it—and the purpose of its divine author. Fitness for the enjoyment of God is of itself felicity; and is, besides, the very measure of our fitness for his service, because both of them are the measure of our likeness to him. Unless we would call in question the infinite blessedness of God, we cannot, at the very least, doubt that our conformity to him is the measure of our

[1] Rom., viii. 16, 17.

[2] Ezek., xxv. 8–11.

capacity to be blessed: and then we must question his infinite beneficence, his eternal love, and his unsearchable richness of grace, in order to exclude his children from the highest participation of his grace and glory to which they are competent. In effect, therefore, the enquiry concerning the nature of our present fitness for eternal life, is merely giving a personal shape to the enquiry concerning the nature of true religion. And the enquiry concerning the nature of our present enjoyment of God, is merely giving a personal shape to the enquiry concerning the actual existence of true religion.

5. The enquiry concerning the nature and extent of the testimony, upon which each individual may assuredly conclude as to his own condition with respect to these great realities, is different from the two preceding, but equally capable of a precise solution. With regard to the sense of self-condemnation natural to fallen man, there is no test of religion, in its widest sense, more unerring, than that all false religion allays this just condemnation of the natural conscience, or else directs it to false, and away from the true grounds of it; while all religion that is true, and all in proportion to its truth, stimulates this righteous judgment of the soul, enlarges it, and directs it against its proper object. In its best condition, this natural sense of self-condemnation being depraved, is incompetent: and the first, and invariable effect of divine grace in fallen man, is to awaken us to a far truer and deeper sense of our real condition; and amongst all the causes of backsliding, the most fruitful one, perhaps, is inadequate conviction of sin. It is thus apparent why false religions are usually received and professed by the mass of men in regions where they prevail; while in regions where God's truth is clearly made known, the great majority of men, though they may be speculative believers, are fully aware that they are not the subjects of the renewing grace of God. As to them, the present enquiry passes them by, acknowledging their just judgment upon themselves, reached in the manner just pointed out: and the whole case ought to be a new proof to them of the truth of the religion which they sinfully neglect, even while it delivers them from the refuges of lies through which such countless multitudes are destroyed. If we really seek for indubitable testimony whereby we may resolve anxious doubts, and quiet distressing perplexities, God offers it to us in abundance. In the *first* place,

there is the testimony of the facts in the case—to be ascertained, marshalled, considered, and decided, justly according to their own nature. Let us examine the Scriptures and see what they make out an heir of God to be. Let us examine ourselves, and see what we actually are. Let us compare one result fairly with the other, and render upon ourselves a righteous judgment, founded upon a righteous comparison. If the judgment is favourable, surely the testimony on which it rests, and which is the particular object of our scrutiny, is adequate to sustain it: the testimony, namely, of God's truth—of our self-knowledge—and of enlightened reason addressed to both. In the *second* place, our moral nature may now distinctly address itself to the case just stated, as made, pondered, and decided upon the facts. Does the heart, out of which are the issues of life, and with which man believeth unto righteousness, approve the conclusion reached before as just. Does it approve, also, the state in which the conclusion declares it to be, as right and good? Does it rejoice in the fruition of that state, as at once its own blessedness, and God's gracious work? Here is additional and conclusive testimony, adding a second foundation on which our decision may rest unshaken: the testimony of our conscience—the very life of our soul—bearing us witness. In the *third* place, there is that divine Witness—the Spirit of God himself. That Spirit which, from our first awakening onward till our communion with Christ in grace begins to merge in our communion with him in glory, has dwelt in our hearts, and with divine power led us thus far. Now he testifies that we are sons and heirs of God, and that we shall be glorified with Christ: and as in every previous testimony, so in this—he gives us tokens of the sublime verity he attests. He puts us in possession of an Earnest of the inheritance of glory! If we can ever believe the Spirit of God at all, we can believe him in this, because here he gives direct testimony himself:[1] and then he adds a threefold divine assurance, each one of which, like his own testimony, is infallible. For we receive the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father:[2] we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise:[3] and we receive into our hearts the earnest of our inheritance.[4] The

[1] 1 John, v. 6; Rom., viii. 16.
[2] Rom., viii. 15; Gal., iv. 6.
[3] Eph., i. 13; iv. 30.
[4] 2 Cor., i. 22; v. 5; Rom., viii. 23; Eph., i. 14; iv. 30.

sum of it is, that the testimony of our consciousness, and the manifold testimony of God's Spirit, are added to the previous testimony of all the facts in the case, attested and approved by the word of God, by our rational nature, and by our moral nature—that is, by faith, by reason, and by conscience. If we cannot, by these means, arrive at assurance concerning our condition before God, it is perfectly evident that there are no other means by which any thing can be made credible: and human nature is reduced to a condition of imbecility, in which neither belief, nor knowledge, nor salvation, has any particular significance.

6. It is often asserted with great confidence that very few believers arrive at this state of communion with Christ in glory, in this life. Probably it would be far more correct to say, that very few enjoy this as their habitual state. For the truth probably is, that all sincere followers of Christ have, at times, a glimpse and fruition of the glory that is laid up for them; participation more or less frequent, and more or less distinct, of those first fruits of the powers of the world to come, which appertain to the children of the kingdom in this life. It will be often found that they who seem to cultivate a sort of distrust, as if it were true humility—need only to vary a little the usual current of their thoughts, to reveal a far deeper hold on divine things than they habitually suppose they possess. Ask such persons, what would induce them to surrender the small and uncertain hope they have in Christ? The answer would be, Not all worlds! It is true, however, we must go forward if we would avoid the risk of being left behind. We must live near to God if we would have constant fruition of him: we must, in our following of Christ, keep close enough, at least, to touch the hem of his garment, if we would never lose the healing virtue which proceeds from him. There is indeed a progress made towards heaven with our heads bowed down like bulrushes, and with sackcloth spread under us. But there is, also, a return to Zion with songs of everlasting joy, and triumph upon our heads. There is a way to be saved, as it were, by fire: and there is a way in which an entrance shall be ministered to us abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.[1] In like manner the frequent uncertainty of believers about their

[1] 2 Peter, i. 1–11.

actual state in the sight of God, will probably be found to arise from the small attention they pay to the subject, to their own soul, and to God ; rendering it well nigh impossible for them to come to any certain, much less any comfortable conclusion. Moreover, what attention they do give to these supreme affairs, is often misdirected ; habitually averting their thoughts from Christ, who would give them light, and strength, and peace ; and fastening them only on themselves, from whence only shame and sorrow can come. And after all, the low attainments with which the professed followers of Christ are prone to content themselves, and the conformity to this world in which they allow themselves, may justify very grave doubts as to the real state of many of them—and remove all surprise at their occasional apprehension of that which is so likely to be true.

7. That men should be found capable of deceiving themselves about the state of their souls, no more shakes the certainty that men need not be deceived ; than it shakes the certainty of our ability to arrive at positive truth on any other subject, to know that we and others are liable to deceive ourselves about it. Indeed such self-delusions are always in the face of the most overwhelming proof, capable of being positively known to us. God has written with perfect clearness, that the wicked shall be turned into hell ; from which just condemnation there is no escape, except by Repentance toward God and Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no possibility of fatal delusion which does not involve one or the other of these points : and how it could occur upon either of the two, might well appear impossible, if the Scriptures did not teach us the contrary—and daily observation confirm their solemn statements. Nay, we must not conceal that the danger arising from the desperate wickedness of our hearts and their deceitfulness above all things, presses us even in a higher form, and presses us even to the end. Our Lord has taught us, that the seed which the sower scattereth is the Word of God ; and that there is only one portion out of four which falls into good and honest hearts, that having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. Of the rest, one portion is taken away by the Devil, out of the hearts that received it ; one portion, having no root, withered, like those who fall away in time of temptation ; and one portion is choked by the thorns which spring up spontaneously in our own hearts.[1]

[1] Luke, viii. 4–15 ; Matt., xiii. 1–23.

When we consider the malice of Satan, the corrupting influence of this sinful world, and the plague of our own hearts ; our errors, our defections, and our backslidings are sufficiently accounted for, even if our attainments in the divine life were far greater than they commonly are. If we will consider what testimony God himself has borne to his servant David :[1] and then consider what David himself did in the matter of Uriah the Hittite :[2] and then what the Lord said and did, both to punish and reclaim his servant, upon whom he had set his love :[3] we shall understand better our own perils and weakness, the anger of God at the backsliding of his children, and the certainty with which he turns their sins into their punishment. Assuredly, the final perseverance of the saints of God and their assurance of grace and salvation—no more depend upon their own strength, or ability, or merit—than that eternal life to which God will certainly bring them does. The unchangeable love of God and the everlasting covenant of God :[4] the inseparable union of the saints with Christ and his continual intercession for them :[5] the Spirit and seed of eternal life abiding in them :[6] these are the grounds upon which their final perdition may be confidently said to be effectually provided against by God. And they who sincerely believe in Christ, and walk in all good conscience before him ;[7] may, by faith grounded on the truth of the promises of God, and by discerning in themselves through the Spirit of God, those graces to which the divine promises are made ;[8] and by the Spirit itself bearing witness with their spirit ;[9] be infallibly assured, nay, for such are the very words of God—may know that they have eternal life.[10]

III.—1. The Spirit which God has given to his children is not the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.[11] And the very Kingdom of God itself, is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.[12] The children of this kingdom participating of that Spirit—possess every thing only by means of their union and communion with the Lord Jesus, their Head and Redeemer. Complete in their participation of grace by means

[1] 1 Kings, xiv. 8; xv. 4, 5.
[2] 2 Samuel, xi. *passim.*
[3] 2 Samuel, xii. 1–23; xiii.—xix
[4] Jer., xxxi. 3; 2 Sam., xxiii. 5.
[5] 1 Cor., i. 8; Heb., vii. 25.
[6] 1 John, iii. 9; ii. 27.
[7] 1 John, ii. 3.
[8] 1 Cor., ii. 12; 1 John, iii. 14–24; iv. 13–16.
[9] Rom., viii. 16; Eph., i. 13.
[10] 1 John, v. 13.
[11] 2 Tim., i. 7.
[12] Rom., xiv. 17.

of that communion with him—it remains to explain more particularly their participation of glory with him—especially in this life. That this actually occurs, has been shown already; for indeed it is expressly written, that the Spirit of the Lord changes us into the image of his glory, as we all with open face behold as in a glass that glory of the Lord; and the manner and extent of the change is intimated, by saying it is from glory to glory.[1] Calling to mind what I have pointed out in the former Treatise, concerning the significance of the Doxology at the close of the Lord's Prayer, as given by the Apostle Matthew: this remarkable use of the term *glory*, with reference to the increasing participation by Christ's people of his image in this life, discloses to us how much the Apostle Paul intended to express in the passage just quoted, and how deeply the truth I am unfolding is laid in the plan of salvation. Until the adoption, that is the redemption of the body—in other words till the glorious resurrection or transfiguration of the righteous, at the coming of the Son of Man; the condition of God's children on earth can rise no higher than one of groaning within themselves, while they wait for that redemption—possessing, at the same time, the first fruits of the Spirit.[2] These first fruits of glory, beyond which we cannot rise while we are in that estate of flesh and blood, which is incompatible with the full inheritance of the Kingdom of God,[3] are three times designated by a very peculiar word, which in our English version is rendered *earnest.** Thus: Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given us the *earnest* of the Spirit in our hearts.[4] Again, when speaking with confidence of our having a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens—of our groaning in our earthly tabernacle—and of our earnest desire to be so clothed upon with our house which is from heaven that mortality might be swallowed up of life; the Apostle adds, Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the *earnest* of the Spirit.[5] And again, the same Apostle speaking of the inheritance to which the saints were predestinated, of the Redeemer through whom they obtain it, and of the means by which they

[1] 2 Cor., iii. 18. [2] Rom., viii. 23. [3] 1 Cor., xv. 50.

* Αρραβῶνα—עֵרָבוֹן—arrhabo—*earnest money.* [4] 2 Cor., i. 21, 22.

[5] 2 Cor., v. 5.

are fitted for it; adds, Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the *earnest* of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.[1] Nothing could therefore be more distinctly taught, than that the saints are invested in this life with a foretaste of that fruition of God, which will be their portion, their reward, and their inheritance in the life to come. It is the first fruits of their communion in glory with Christ: it is the earnest of all that is to follow: not only a pledge of it—but a pledge of that peculiar sort, that delivers to us, in advance, a portion of what is to come.

2. These first fruits of glory with Christ, communicated to the saints in this life in the form of this earnest of their future and complete participation of the glory of which he is fully possessed, and in which they are eternally interested; are declared to be from God and wrought by him—to be through the Holy Spirit of promise—and to be in our hearts. It is wonderful how the Scriptures insist upon this heart work! Here at the beginning of glory, it is the pure in heart who possess God, just as it is the pure in heart who shall at last see God—and just as, at the very first, it was with the heart we believed unto righteousness, and all through our progress the love of God was shed abroad in our heart! And the effects which are produced on us, are precisely analogous to this mode of viewing and treating the whole case—precisely such effects as are incapable of being produced in any other way. We sit together in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.[2] There is begotten in us a sense of God's love.[3] Peace of conscience—that peace of God which passeth all understanding, is given to us.[4] Joy in the Holy Ghost is diffused through the soul.[5] And it rejoices in hope of the glory of God.[6] All depends upon the transcendent excellence of what is good, what is pure, what is holy. All illustrates the overwhelming truth, that supreme felicity is founded on the union of supreme sanctity with supreme love. All has relevancy to that aspect of God, wherein we are sealed unto him with the Holy Spirit of *Promise*. First it was Faith—then it was Assurance—then an Earnest sealed with the Spirit of Promise. Always it is trust in God; confiding, loving, hoping, rejoicing, adoring trust in God! Higher than this, flesh and blood may not pass. To do so,

[1] Eph., i. 14. [2] Eph., ii. 6. [3] Rom., v. 5.
[4] Phil., iv. 7. [5] Rom., xiv. 17. [6] Rom., v. 2.

this corruption must put on incorruption—this mortal, immortality.

3. The stages of our existence are very different from each other: but all of them are distinctly explained to us in the sacred Scriptures. Our first period is passed on this earth, in its present condition, with our immortal spirit and our mortal body so united as to form one living but mortal creature. And the highest estate we can attain here, is one in which the sanctified soul dwells in a body wholly corrupt and under sentence of death. The second period of our existence is that in which the soul and the body have been separated by the stroke of death; the one returning to the dust as it was—the other to God who gave it. And the third period of it commences with the resurrection of the body in incorruption and glory, and its reunion with the soul; after which is an endless existence of glory and blessedness to all the redeemed of the Lord. The Lord Jesus took flesh and blood, because his brethren, the children whom God had given him, were partakers thereof: and the great principle on which that was done, is declared to be, that in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren.[1] He took no human person—and therefore no personal defects: he took no pollution—for none was original and inherent in human nature as created; and moreover, it was impossible for him, either as God or Mediator, to take pollution. But he did take whatever was original and inherent in human nature; namely, a human body, and a rational soul—both of which he united to his divine person as the Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity. And thus fully qualified to be a merciful and faithful high priest—he not only made reconciliation for the sins of the people, but in all things pertaining to God, he was at once the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, and faithful to him that appointed him.[2] He passed through all the conditions, just explained, through which his brethren pass—life, death, resurrection—like unto them in all: without which we could have no communion with him, in any condition passed through by us, but not by him. So exact was this similitude, and so deep was the principle which made it becoming in him to be made like unto his brethren in all things;[3] that Christ was transfigured before he tasted death.[4] And thus when the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout,

[1] Heb., ii. 14–17. [2] Heb., iii. 1, 2. [3] Heb., ii. 17. [4] Matt., xvii. 1–9.

with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God; the dead in Christ shall rise first; and then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.[1] But instantly, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, and as soon as the dead who sleep in Jesus are raised—we who shall not sleep, that is who shall be alive at the coming of the Lord—shall be changed.[2] And the precise nature and cause of the change are explained to us; the Saviour, the Lord Jesus, when he comes, shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself.[3] In life, in death, in the state of separation of the soul and body, in the resurrection, in transfiguration; the Scriptures leave us no room to doubt that we have communion with Christ, whether in grace or glory; and that in all these wonders, the similitude of Christ to his brethren—his having passed where they have to pass, and been what they are to be, is the foundation of that communion, and of all their blessedness therein. As bearing upon this general subject, I have on a former occasion called attention to the very remarkable period and estate of Christ, between his resurrection and his final taking up into heaven from the immediate presence of his Apostles near to Bethany, on Mount Olivet, forty days after his passion.[4] If this was a state not relevant to things pertaining to God in the mediatorial work of Christ, and through which his brethren are not to pass, and in which they are to have no communion with him: it is, in all these respects, unique in the whole dispensation of the Son of Man. If otherwise, it has a most important bearing upon the question touching the condition of the saints immediately following the second coming of the Son of Man: and appears to teach that we are to expect then a new and very glorious dispensation of the risen and changed saints, but that it will not constitute the final and eternal state of the Kingdom of God.

4. It might be thought strange that the saints of God die at all; and the fact that two of them—Enoch and Elijah—have been translated without tasting death, might appear to embarrass the matter still further.[5] But the Scriptures set the point in a

[1] 1 Thess., iv. 16, 17.
[2] 1 Cor., xv. 50–52.
[3] Phil., iii. 20, 21.
[4] Luke, xxiv. 50–52; Acts, i. 1–12.
[5] Gen., v. 24; 2 Kings, ii. 11.

very clear light. Death is the wages of sin :[1] and as all men have sinned, death has passed upon all.[2] It is appointed unto men once to die : not to every man, but to men.[3] For though death has passed upon all men, the living saints who will be changed in a moment at the appearing of the Son of Man in his glory, will incur that sentence in that peculiar way. So wonderful is the accuracy, and so great are the resources of the divine word. Moreover, the righteous are, at last, wholly delivered from death—which is the last enemy that shall be destroyed, and whose destruction by the glorified Saviour will be the signal for his delivery up of the Kingdom to God, even the Father.[4] Even when the saints endure its stroke, its sting and curse are taken away ; and it is by means of it that they are set perfectly free from sin and misery, and made capable of perfect communion with Christ in glory.[5] For at death, the souls of believers are made perfect in holiness.[6] The disembodied spirits of just men made perfect, see God as he is, and are like him.[7] Those vile bodies—that sinful flesh in which no good thing dwelt, must wait in the grave for their full redemption ;[8] certain to be brought to glory with Jesus in whom they sleep ;[9] and to be reunited, in their resurrection, each to its own glorified soul—they themselves being spiritual, incorruptible, and for ever victorious over death.

5. In the resurrection of the just, and the eternal judgment which will follow it, and the delivery up of the Kingdom to God, even the Father ; every thing that manifests the perfect communion of the believer with Christ in glory, will flow to him as a benefit of the Covenant of Redemption ; and will result like all the fruits of his communion with Christ in glory previously bestowed on him, whether in his mortal or his separate state, from his original union with Christ through the virtue of his mediation, and his subsequent communion with him in grace and glory, as the Redeemer of God's Elect. I do not propose, in this place, to enter upon the consideration of these, which may be justly called the *Last Things :* whose treatment belongs to another place. It is enough to have pointed out how the unspeakable blessings to whose consideration so many chapters

[1] Rom., vi. 23. [2] Rom., v. 12. [3] Heb., ix. 27. [4] 1 Cor., xv. 24–26.
[5] Rom., xiv. 13 ; Eph., v. 27 ; Luke, xxiii. 43 ; Phil., i. 23.
[6] Heb., xii. 23. [7] John, iii. 2. [8] Rom., viii. 23. [9] 1 Thess., iv. 14.

have been devoted ; are fruitful through eternity, as well as in life and at death ; how it is Christ through whom they are made effectual in both worlds ; and how the very beginnings of grace in a penitent soul here below, involve the very end of all glory to all eternity ! Let it suffice to add, that the Scriptures distinctly teach that, at the resurrection of the just, believers will be raised up in glory by the glorified Redeemer :[1] that in the Day of Judgment they will be openly acknowledged by Jesus Christ, the Judge of quick and dead :[2] will be made perfectly blessed in the full and eternal enjoyment of God :[3] and will be delivered up on the Lamb's Book of Life, along with the glorified Kingdom of which they are the members, by the Son to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.[4]

6. Let us not lose sight for a moment of the sublime thought of God—of the extent to which we have traced it—and of the position we have now reached. The First Book of this Treatise was occupied in determining the condition of the universe, the ends proposed by God, the means to those ends, and their divine working until now. In this Book it is the actual, direct, effective dealings of God with individual men—in the salvation of the soul, which I have endeavoured to explain, to classify, and to demonstrate. Upon such subjects the thing to be most carefully avoided is, all attempts to invent any thing—to originate any thing : the thing to be most carefully done is, to follow exactly and completely the thought of God, in all its light and all its power, to the utmost capacity of our frail nature. In proportion as we succeed in these two endeavours, the science of all sciences, the science of God in what he is and what he does, emerges from the chaos of human conceits, and from the profound darkness of human ignorance ; and grows into a form infinitely distinct, and becomes a force divinely effectual. And thus every step we take makes the next step more sure, and makes us more competent to take it. We must not allow ourselves to suppose that these things are beyond our reach : they are revealed to our Faith—and they are a light and a power unto us : even by the divine grace, the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Yet we must not presume that they are things which open their divine nature to our

[1] 1 Thess., iv. 16, 17; 1 Cor., xv. 51–53.
[2] Matt., xxv. 33.
[3] Ps. xvi. 11; Rev., vii. 14–17.
[4] 1 Cor., xv. 24–28.

careless, fickle, and shallow enquiries. It is they who wait on the Lord, that renew their strength. It is in his light that we see light. It is when God has opened our eyes that we behold wondrous things, not only in his law, but in our own souls, and upon the earth around us, and in the heavens above us.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD,

SUBJECTIVELY CONSIDERED.

ARGUMENT OF THE THIRD BOOK.

This Third Book completes the exhibition of the direct work of divine grace in man, considered individually and with reference to this life. Its aim is to point out with absolute certainty, the operation of the New Life implanted by God in the renewed soul: the uniform operation of that life in every child of God, individually considered. For, however various the experience of renewed souls may be, there are particulars, and they fundamental, in which their experience is necessarily identical: and this Book attempts to disclose the matter of the vital operation of the individual soul renewed by God, in the way of all Christian Offices considered with direct reference to our personal Union and Communion with Christ. All Christian Offices which result indirectly from our Union and Communion with Christ, namely, all such as depend upon the Communion of Saints with each other, in consequence of their mutual Communion with Christ, are omitted here, and will be fully considered afterwards. And the word *Offices* is used because it is not only the most comprehensive of all, but because no other single word adequately expresses the nature of these operations of the New Life of Christian souls, resulting from their communion with Christ. For these are services—duties, so high, that practical Christianity consists in their performance; so peculiar, that their habitual omission is the distinct evidence that we are not Christians at all: and though they are duties—services so decisive—yet they spring up spontaneously in the renewed soul, as if they were only its delights, and that exactly in proportion to the power of its own New Life: and still, it is only through divine grace that they can be performed at all, or that the desire to perform them exists. They are the effects produced by the action of that New Life, which is itself produced and perfected in the manner pointed out in the immediately preceding Book, and the ground and method for the production of which were explained in the First Book of this Treatise. First, Divine Grace redeeming us—secondly, Divine Grace in its saving work upon our souls—and now, thirdly, Divine Grace manifesting itself through us, in the immediate and necessary operation of this New Life. Faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ, and Repentance towards God, are, therefore, first discussed, they being the two fundamental and universal Offices of all re-

newed souls—and of Christianity itself. To the first of these two, Saving Faith, the Thirteenth Chapter, which is the First of this Third Book, is devoted: and its threefold aspect as a condition of the Covenant of Redemption—as a special grace of the Divine Spirit—and as a peculiar and permanent habit of the renewed soul—is considered—and its whole nature, use, and effect attempted to be explained: incidentally, various topics of great importance, amongst them the spiritual helplessness and moral bondage of man, and the futility of all attempts to rob this great distinctive mark of the New Creature of its supernatural character—are discussed; the object of all being to exhibit the New Life in its chief aspect, as one of Faith in the Divine Redeemer. The Fourteenth Chapter, which is the Second of this Book, is occupied in discussing the second great Christian Office, namely, Repentance unto Life—which is indissolubly connected with Saving Faith—being competent, indeed, only to a believing soul, as Faith is competent only to a renewed soul: the relations between which two fundamental graces and the New Obedience are pointed out—as well as those mutually subsisting between Spiritual Life—Righteousness—and Repentance: the whole doctrine of our moral nature, and moral judgments, and moral sense, is attempted to be unfolded—in its relations to the spiritual system disclosed in the Scriptures—and to the spiritual system involved in every form of unbelief: the nature of true Repentance, in its origin, progress, and results, is explained, together with the acts and states of the penitent soul, with reference to God, to sin, to duty, to holiness, and to salvation through Jesus Christ: and the characteristic peculiarity of this perpetual habit of the believing soul, together with the wide connection, the simplicity, the certainty, and the amazing efficacy of the whole doctrine herein asserted, is attempted to be demonstrated. The three following Chapters, namely, the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth, are devoted to those great and universal Christian Offices, which are expressed by the terms New Obedience, Good Works, and Spiritual Warfare—one Chapter to each: Offices which are as inseparable from the exercise of Repentance toward God and Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, as the exercise of these fundamental graces is from Union and Communion of the New Creature with the Divine Redeemer. The Fifteenth Chapter, which is the Third of this Book, is occupied with an enquiry into the Nature, Fruits, and End of the New Obedience of the New Creature:—wherein those Offices which it owes and renders immediately to God, are distinguished from those it owes and renders more particularly to its fellow-creatures, and the nature, exercise, and influence of the former, are disclosed: amongst the Offices of the New Obedience, due and rendered especially to God by the New Creature—Prayer, Fasting and Watching, Thanksgiving, Vows and Lawful Oaths, are considered: and the gracious and the natural aspect of these distinguishing peculiarities of the Christian life—and the condition of human nature when thoroughly influenced by them, is exhibited. In the Sixteenth Chapter, which is the Fourth of this Book, the Doctrine and Nature of Good Works is attempted to be developed: wherein it is shown that they embrace all duty due by us as followers of Christ, to our fellow-men, that they are the fruits of our New Obedience rendered to God through Christ, that they are regulated absolutely by the will of God, are incompetent in their scriptural sense to any but a child of God, and are diligently and joyfully

performed by us, in proportion to the power of the life of God in us: some of those chiefly insisted on in the Scriptures, such as Charity and Almsgiving, are particularly set forth, in themselves, in their relations to Christ and to all Christian Offices, and in their effects: the connection of Good Works with our holiness, our happiness, and our usefulness—their bearing upon our endeavours to glorify God and adorn the doctrine we profess, and their special relation to our judgment in the great day are disclosed: the bearing of the whole doctrine and practice upon the Kingdom of Christ, and upon Christian life, and upon many incidental questions, such as Christian Liberty, and Liberty of Conscience, implicit Faith and tender Consciences, the power of the Civil Magistrate in things Sacred, and the Spiritual Authority of Councils and Synods, is explicated: and, in the end, a brief and thorough analysis and summary of the whole matter is attempted. The Seventeenth Chapter, which is the Fifth of this Book, is devoted to the consideration of that Spiritual Warfare which every penitent and believing follower of the Son of God must wage through a life of New Obedience and Good Works, that is, of conformity to God, and beneficence towards man—with the Flesh, the World and the Devil, up to the very gate of heaven; wherein the nature, necessity, grounds, progress, and result of this Warfare are explained: its absolute connection with our witness-bearing for Christ, our working together with God, and our suffering together with Jesus, is disclosed: its immediate connection with the means of Grace, with the progress of the life of God in our soul, and with our endeavours to bless our fellow-men and to glorify God, is pointed out: and the certainty and glory of our final victory, through Christ Jesus, is demonstrated. Having thus explained in successive Chapters, the aspects of the divine life as it manifests itself in those in whom it is begotten and established; namely, that our lives are lives of Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, and of Repentance toward God, that these result necessarily in lives of New Obedience toward God, of which all Good Works toward our fellow-men are the necessary fruits, and that the whole of this Christian Life involves and produces in us a perpetual Spiritual Warfare against all the enemies of the Captain of our Salvation and of our own souls: what remains is, to point out with clearness and certainty an Infallible Rule whereby such a life may be directed and sustained in all things. The Eighteenth Chapter, therefore, which is the Sixth and last of this Book, is devoted to the demonstration of the necessity of such a Rule of Faith and Obedience, and of its actual existence in the sacred Scriptures, inspired and revealed by the Holy Ghost, wherein the nature, origin, restoration, and universal obligation of the Moral Law is set forth—the infallible Knowledge of God unto the salvation of sinners is shown to be revealed to our Faith—the relation of Faith and true Righteousness to each other—that of both to the Saviour—that of all three to the sacred Scriptures—and that of the whole to our Salvation by Grace, is disclosed: and the reality, completeness, and efficacy of the written word of God as the only and Infallible Rule of all that man ought to believe concerning God, and all that God requires of man is established; and so it is shown that man possesses in them, and in them alone, the perfect Knowledge of the chief end of his existence, in glorifying God and enjoying him for ever. In a field of discussion so vast, and in the midst of such sublime chains of thought disclosed by God himself, if it may be

allowed to suggest and define for each of the six Chapters, one truth which may be considered Supreme, and then to connect these fundamental truths into one general and compact statement, having the force of a great argument, while containing themes for multiplied discussions: perhaps it may be thought that these demands are, in some degree, met in the statement of the truths which follow, as being the capital truths explicated in this Third Book. Namely—That by a direct act of the renewed soul, convinced of its sin, misery, and impotence, and believing and trusting God, it habitually accepts and rests on Christ crucified for Salvation; the nature of this great act and habit of the soul being, that it is the fundamental and perpetual manifestation of the New Creature; its use being to establish the Union and to perpetuate the Communion between the crucified Saviour and the renewed sinner; and its effect being to advance the soul continually in all fitness for salvation and to secure that salvation; this being Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, considered as the first of all Christian Offices:—That in the exercise of the second great Office of true religion, which is Repentance toward God, the renewed soul habitually apprehends the evil of all sin and of its own sins in particular, and also apprehends the mercy of God in Christ to believing sinners; and so with grief and hatred for sin and for itself on account of sin it turns penitently to God from all sin, with set purpose after New Obedience; this vital manifestation of the life of God in all believers, this habit of the renewed soul, being, like the preceding grace, wrought in God's children by his Word and Spirit, for the merits' sake of Jesus Christ, and being constantly exercised by them in endeavours to overcome all sin, and to obey the perfect law of God:—That the habitual condition of the Believing and Penitent Soul toward God, is one of true, willing, and joyful Obedience to his Will, exactly in proportion to its own full and stedfast Communion with Christ, and the completeness of its own restoration to the image of God; and that this New Obedience considered as rendered immediately to God, is especially manifested and nourished in the diligent keeping of the heart, the earnest exercise and growth of grace, and the careful and habitual use and enjoyment of those offices and means divinely appointed for the mortification of sin, for the comfort and edification of the soul, and for the promotion of the glory of God in the sanctification of his saints:—That the heart which is right in the sight of God manifests its Communion with the Lord Jesus Christ, in strong and habitual desire and endeavour to perform all Good Works; which are the fruits of its New Obedience exhibited in sincere and continual endeavours after the comfort and edification of every human being, according to their several relations and necessities, and to our opportunities and obligations, as followers of the Lord Jesus, according to his word and for the promotion of his glory and our own salvation; we being prompted thereto by love for him and for our fellow-men, and sustained therein by the grace of God:—That the Christian Life of Faith, Repentance, New Obedience, and Good Works, necessarily involves and produces a Spiritual Warfare in us as followers of Christ the Captain of our Salvation, against the Flesh, the World, and the Devil, who are implacable enemies of our Lord and of our souls; wherein by perpetual fidelity to him through divine grace, the true soldiers of his cross have constant experience of his infinite sufficiency and of their own vileness and nothingness; and

whereby they are at last brought off more than conqueror through him that loved them:—That the Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the Infallible Rule of Faith, Repentance, New Obedience, Good Works, and Spiritual Warfare; God having revealed therein all that man ought to believe concerning God, and all that God requires of man, in order to eternal life; whereby the chief end of our existence in glorifying God and enjoying him for ever, is made known to us with divine certainty and divine authority; and the Saviour and the Spirit which they reveal, make the means of grace instituted in them, effectual towards us, by the power of God.

CHAPTER XIII.

FAITH TOWARD THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

I. 1. Third Step in the Subjective Disclosure of Salvation: The two great Offices of Christianity.—2. The Act of the Soul which we call Faith, and the State of the soul exercising it, peculiar to the New Creature.—3. The Work of Divine Grace in Man: neither properly Miraculous, nor properly Natural—but Supernatural.—4. Every Exercise of Faith an Act and Manifestation of the New Life in Man.—II. 1. Divine Definition and Illustration of Faith.—2. Faith is the Substance of Things hoped for.—3. Faith is the Evidence of Things not seen.—4. Faith is a Grace of the Spirit: With the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness.—5. To be Effectual, Faith must be what the Scriptures make it out.—III. 1. The threefold Aspect of Saving Faith—as a Condition of the Covenant of Redemption—as a special Grace of the Spirit—as a peculiar Habit of the Renewed Soul.—2. Nature, Use, and Effect of Faith.—3. The Divine Saviour and the Revelation of him, the exclusive Objects of Faith.—4. Faith is neither an Efficient, nor a Meritorious Cause.—IV. 1. Relation of Faith to the Word of God, and to the Means of Grace: Results thereof.—2. Assurance of Faith real: but not of the Essence of Faith.—3. The Spiritual Helplessness of the Natural Man.—4. The Moral Bondage of the Natural Man.—5. Boundless Compass of Faith.

I.—1. The great thought of God which I have traced through two stages of its manifestation in the two preceding Books, now requires us to advance another step in our attempt to follow the Way of Life. In the First Book of this Treatise I have endeavoured to determine the exact circumstances and manner in which the knowledge of God is subjectively applied to the salvation of men: that knowledge of God to the demonstration of which as mere knowledge, the *First Part of Theology* was devoted. The Second Book of this Treatise I have devoted to the actual application of that knowledge of God, practically and personally to man in his salvation; and in its successive chapters I have traced and laid open the work of God toward man, and the progress of man under that divine working, from the moment of our first awakening, to the completion of grace and the commencement of glory in this life. In both the preceding Books, following the method of the inspired writers, I have kept strictly

to the pursuit of the main subject, as from point to point it opened itself alike to human thought and in human experience, under the method disclosed by God. One necessary effect of this simple and strict way of treatment, was the exclusion of whatever was not directly involved in the divine conception I was striving to trace; and even the exclusion of whatever was incidentally involved in it, from any further treatment than was demanded by the great and immediate enquiry. In salvation every thing depends on our union with Christ. Out of that springs our communion with him both in grace and in glory. Out of that also springs our communion with each other in Love. And so all social as well as individual idea of God's saving work amongst men—every conception of the individual Christian—every conception of the Church of God—is grounded there. This communion with each other resulting from our mutual union with Christ, we are not yet prepared to discuss: for as yet the individual aspect of the matter is not complete, till we shall have disclosed the individual working of this new life wrought in man, under the power of this subjective knowledge of God unto salvation. It has been carefully shown how this new life is begotten, sustained, and advanced; and how it will finally result. We must now observe more particularly how it acts, how it manifests itself, what are its duties, its endeavours, its offices, its fruits, its trials, and its triumphs. This is that third step which I have just said we must now take, in disclosing our salvation considered as strictly practical and individual: disclosing it in the personal offices more immediately relevant to God, which are inseparable from the existence of that new life which all who are united to Christ share with him. This is the subject-matter of this Third Book. And I commence it with a more complete development than it has yet been proper to attempt, of the two great offices of Christianity—the two fundamental, characteristic, and universal graces, duties, and manifestations of the New Creature. Saving Faith will be discussed in this Chapter, Repentance unto Life in the next.

2. Faith is frequently spoken of as mere belief on testimony. An act of the mind not different, in itself, when applied to spiritual and divine things, from similar acts of the mind when applied to other things: the difference being exclusively in the nature of the things believed, and in the nature of the testimony

on which they are believed. The term *saving* added to Faith is, according to this mode of viewing the subject, merely intended to signify that the particular Faith thus designated, has the word of God for the testimony on which it rests, and those things which immediately concern salvation as its object. If this is the whole account of the matter, it is not easy to see how Faith can be truly called a grace of the Spirit : nor how the state of mind out of which it proceeds, is in the least degree different from its natural and ordinary state : nor how any quality or condition of the soul beyond such as all men naturally possess, can be necessary in order to the exercise of Saving Faith. If, on the other hand, this account of Faith is intended to apply, exclusively, to acts of the renewed mind, and to belief of the testimony of God concerning spiritual things : then, in the *first* place, the whole object of this method of explaining the matter is defeated, as soon as any one demands an explanation of that supernatural renewal of the mind, which enabled it to believe thus : and, in the *second* place, even on the supposition of the renewal of the mind, the explanation is neither true nor sufficient—since the gracious acts of Faith of the renewed mind are essentially different from its natural acts of belief. The gracious act of Saving Faith by which the New Creature rests on the divine Redeemer crucified for him, and whereby he receives peace and grows in holiness ; is not identical with, nor even similar to, the natural act of belief by which the same person in his unrenewed state, gave credit to the story of Christ, on the divine testimony of its truth, and thereby merely increased in knowledge. And all glosses which tend to show that such acts of the renewed and the unrenewed mind, result either from the same state or the same exercise of that mind, are founded in a denial of the regeneration of man.

3. It is as idle as it is irreverent in us to handle the mystery of God's grace deceitfully, in the vain expectation of reconciling the Spirit and the flesh, and satisfying cavils whose foundation lies in that very pollution which that grace proposes to cleanse. The Scriptures teach us in the plainest manner, the ruin of man and the absolute necessity of his new creation. They do not permit us to doubt that the means provided in the plan of salvation, are precisely adapted to the work of our complete restoration to God. That work in us is not properly miraculous ;

because it proceeds continually by the intervention between God and the result, of means which are appropriate to that result. Neither is the work properly natural; because the means used are not, of themselves, efficacious in the production of the result, after the manner in which means are naturally efficacious—but are made efficacious only in a supernatural manner. The whole work of God's grace in man has a distinct character of its own, neither properly miraculous nor properly natural; but combining elements, some of which are divine and some of which are human—the work itself is properly supernatural, and the effects are supernatural. When this work is finally complete in us, though our nature, and our self-conscious, identical existence have been preserved throughout; we are as utterly changed from what we were in our natural estate, as we were different in that estate from the perfect condition of our original creation. That man could fall by natural means, and yet cannot recover himself by natural means, is an ultimate necessity of dependent existence itself: because in one case, infallible dependent existence is impossible—being self-contradictious: and because in the other, spontaneous good out of evil, or truth out of falsehood, is impossible, being self-contradictious. Now at every stage of the progress of this wonderful transformation of man, from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; means exist of ascertaining the reality of the progress, and of distinguishing the stage reached. Vital manifestations continually occur: evidence of the existence and growth of the new life, perpetually disclose themselves. The earliest, the most constant, and the most decisive of them all, is Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ.[1]

4. Every act of Faith by us, is an act of the New Creature. Let the act be performed as it may, if it be gracious it is an act of the New Creature. All these acts are, no doubt, our acts; as much as any other acts we perform. But if that expressed the whole, or even the chief part of the matter, these acts of Faith could have no more effect upon our spiritual condition, and could afford no more evidence of our spiritual state, than any other mental act of ours. Indeed, less, by far, than most others; since what a man will do or forbear to do, depends directly on his will—while what he will believe or disbelieve, what he will love or hate, depends upon his will only very indirectly. To see

[1] Heb., xi. *passim.*

the distinction between truth and falsehood, between good and evil—to be real—is simply our own act : an act natural to man—and the whole of that matter is uttered in saying that. But to realize the untruth of our own nature, and to abhor ourselves on account of our pollution : to realize the infinite mercy of God in Christ, and to embrace him and his salvation as the supreme good ; while they are also our acts—are acts very far from being natural to man—and very far from being explained by simply calling them our acts. Throughout God's universe, as far as we have knowledge, every created thing, animate and inanimate, physical and spiritual, is endowed with qualities peculiar to its own nature, and acts by laws impressed upon that particular nature, by the creative power of God. Now he who is born again—who is renewed by the Holy Ghost—in one word the New Creature, is as really a creature of God as any thing else in the universe is : and upon a most obvious scale of classification it is as exact to say that Faith is the characteristic mark of the New Creature, as that reason is of the natural man, or that instinct is of the brute creation, or that the inanimate creation throughout its multiplied divisions has characteristic marks distinguishing its several classes. Nor is any one of all these characteristic marks of all these multiplied classes of the inanimate creation ; nor is instinct in the brute, nor is reason in the natural man ; more absolutely a part of these existences respectively, more completely a quality bestowed by God in their creation, more infallibly a proof that the creature exists and that God is its author : than Faith, in the New Creature is, that he has been born again, and that of God. We have been created anew in Christ Jesus : therefore Saving Faith manifests itself in us.[1] We have been renewed in the spirit of our mind : therefore we embrace Jesus Christ offered to us in the Gospel.[2]

II.—1. God, by the mouth of his Apostle, has given to his people a precise definition of this great grace :[3] a thing very unusual in the sacred writings. This definition is immediately followed by the statement of numerous personal examples of the eminent exercise of Faith, extending from Abel to David : and to these are added numerous classes of persons, and descriptions of numerous acts and events illustrative of their Faith. So that the definition itself is completely and variously illustrated by a

[1] Eph., ii. 4–10. [2] Eph., iv. 20–24. [3] Heb., xi. 1.

divine treatise concerning Faith, covering the whole career of the Church from the foundation of the world to the coming of Christ.[1] Let it be remembered that all these illustrious examples are intentionally selected by the Apostle from amongst saints, of whom he twice remarks that they had not actually received the promises, but only saw them afar off; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.[2] Thus contemplated, defined, and illustrated, therefore, this is the Faith by which the just live, and by which they believe to the saving of their soul.[3] In its absolute nature, *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*[4] As if to put the matter wholly at rest, the same Apostle has declared, in another place, that as there is but one God and Father of all, but one Lord, one Spirit, one Church, one hope of our calling, one baptism; so also there is but one Faith, whereby we can walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, or keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.[5]

2. This one and only Faith through which the soul can be saved, and by which the just live; is, in the *first* place, The substance of things hoped for; and is, in the *second* place, The evidence of things not seen.* It is that grace which concerns itself especially with realities which are unseen—that is, which are spiritual and eternal:[6] and amongst these unseen things, those with which it concerns itself are those for which the renewed soul earnestly longs. With reference to these things, considered as hoped for, Faith is the *substance* of them to the renewed soul: with reference to them considered as unseen, Faith is the *evidence* of them, to the renewed soul. Such is the divine exposition of this great grace of the Spirit—this decisive vital manifestation of the life of God in the soul that is born from above. We may indeed confuse and perplex ourselves by putting curious significations upon the words *substance* and *evidence;* or rather, perhaps, upon the words thus rendered into English. But, unless we do so, the matter is perfectly clear. The nature of the New Creature is such, the state of the renewed soul is such, that it can realize as actual every thing to which it has title by the promise of God; and can realize as actually possessed

[1] Heb., xi. *passim.* [2] Heb., xi. 13, 39, 40. [3] Heb., x. 38, 39.
[4] Heb., xi. 1. [5] Eph., iv. 1–5.
* Ελπιζομενων υποστασις, πραγματων ελεγχος ου βλεπομενων. [6] 2 Cor., iv. 18.

and enjoyed by it, so much of its promised inheritance as is bestowed upon it in this life. Substantially, its state and nature now in its begun restoration to God, are what they will be when the full fruition of these great and precious promises is reached: and the things promised and now partially possessed, and the things to be fully possessed hereafter are substantially the same. That act of the renewed nature which realizes and appropriates the promises of God, is Saving Faith. It is the things promised by God to his children which are the specific objects of the hopes of the renewed soul: these are the very things hoped for—of which the divine definition asserts that Faith is the substance. For, says the same Apostle, the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints, if they continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel; this mystery of God among the Gentiles, the riches of the glory of which he would make known to his saints; what is it, but Christ in you the hope of glory?[1] This is the hope by which the same Apostle says we are saved.[2] United to Christ by Faith, resting on Christ by Faith, receiving every thing from Christ and receiving Christ himself by Faith: it is through Faith that every thing gracious is realized by the renewed soul. Faith is the substance of things hoped for.

3. But there is more. Faith is the evidence of things not seen. Of the existence and nature of the outward world—sense is the evidence provided by God. We see, and feel, and touch, and taste, and smell: and we—not the senses—but *we*, by them, realize all things of which they take cognizance. Of the things which pass within us, our consciousness is the evidence: *we* realize things of which consciousness is the evidence. Of unseen—of spiritual—of eternal things—of God's purpose of saving sinners—of God's way of saving sinners—of the infinite and endless salvation itself: what evidence have we or can we have? Twofold: *first*, their revelation by God *to* us; *secondly*, their revelation by God *in* us—that is, the occurrence in us of a supernatural regeneration, by which, being born again of the Spirit, we have become personally cognizant of these revealed things, are made capable of apprehending them, and have actually realized them. That vital act of the New Creature, in which it apprehends and realizes these unseen things

[1] Col., i. 21–27. [2] Rom., viii. 24.

—these infinite, spiritual, eternal realities—is Saving Faith. And so Faith is the evidence of things not seen. Upon the data, it is an evidence perfectly overwhelming: to gainsay which is wholly impossible, except we deny the revelation of God *to* us—or the revelation of God *in* us. Christian people ought to see that the true representation of this vital subject, is also the impregnable representation of it: and that all paltering with it, casts doubt over the whole revelation of God both to us and in it. They ought also to understand that the evidence of sense and of consciousness concerning the outward and inward things to which they respectively relate, is neither more clear in itself, more decisive in its nature, nor more secure from unbelieving cavils, than the evidence of Faith is concerning the unseen things to which it relates. They ought to know that the same scepticism which, under the abused name of Philosophy, assails the trustworthiness of their Faith, assails alike the trustworthiness of their consciousness and of their senses. So far, at least, such unbelievers are right, that judging God unworthy to be trusted, we can have little reason, afterwards, to trust any thing else.

4. Thus defined, the intimate nature of this perpetual manifestation of the new life of the soul, is still further opened to us by the Scriptures. In order to be saved, the belief which we must exercise concerning Jesus Christ, is a belief *in the heart.* The word, said Moses, is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart.[1] Paul quotes this, and adds, That is, the word of faith which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.[2] This is the same decisive truth which Philip announced to the Ethiopian eunuch when he baptized him on the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza: If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.[3] Nor is the statement of the case more distinct, than the reason of it is. That which is decisive of our moral condition, cannot possibly restrict itself to our mental condition: the presence or the absence of Faith in Christ, is decisive of our moral state: it is therefore idle to speak of a Saving Faith which relates only to the understanding. On the contrary, that Faith, the end of

[1] Deut., xxx. 14. [2] Rom., x. 8–10. [3] Acts, viii. 37.

which is the salvation of the soul,[1] and the effect of which is victory over the world :[2] is a Faith which works by love,[3] and which so working purifies the heart.[4] And thus we see that without Faith it is impossible to please God.[5] On the other hand, it is not only impossible for the world by wisdom to know God, but this impossibility is directly connected with the wisdom of God:[6] for it is of the very essence of salvation that it must be by grace; and if by grace, not only that it should be through Faith, but that Faith should stand, not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.[7] Saving Faith, therefore, cannot be any mere exercise of the human understanding—any mere act of the mind of man, in which it believes any testimony, even that of God, about every thing—even salvation. But it is a grace of the divine Spirit, whereby the New Creature receives and rests upon Christ crucified, as he is offered to us in the Gospel, for salvation.[8]

5. In effect, the relation in which we stand to God considered as our Creator, still more considered as our Saviour, makes it inconceivable how Faith could be any thing else than what the Scriptures represent it to be ; or how it could be effectual in our salvation, if it were any thing but what it is. His absolute dominion over us as Creator and Saviour, and our absolute dependence on him as creatures and sinners, beget, as the unavoidable result, a condition on our part in which a believing, loving, hoping, confiding, rejoicing trust in him, is our very highest conceivable estate here below. And, perhaps, that very order is not far from the exact progress of our increasing Faith. In like manner, the nature even of our intellectual powers is such, that knowledge itself takes its rise, not from any process of the reason, but from an unshaken belief—trust—in the ultimate truths—the fundamental data of consciousness. So that, considering human nature in whatever light, the more thoroughly we understand ourselves, the more grand and simple does that sublime truth of God appear, which in its glorious proportion involves all other truth, and which—if Philosophy were worthy of such an association—I would call a divine Philosophy. How futile then, must those pretensions be, which attribute to the mere will of man, things which sotranscend the soul itself to which the will

[1] 1 Peter, i. 9. [2] 1 John, v. 4. [3] Gal., v. 6. [4] Acts, xv. 9.
[5] Heb., xi. 6. [6] 1 Cor., i. 21. [7] 1 Cor., ii. 5. [8] Phil., iii. 9, 10.

is subject, that they demand the power of God! No one pretends that man has more than one soul. All his powers, mental and moral, are but faculties of that one soul—manifestations of its life and qualities. When it was pure, so were they: when it is depraved, so are they: when it is restored, so are they. The powers of life all combined, cannot exceed life itself. To allege that any particular power exceeds the force of the whole soul, is self-contradictious. The will and the understanding can effect nothing which transcends the force of the other faculties with which, under which, or over which they can be supposed to operate: much less which transcends the whole force of them all united, and of the soul itself. Nay, if the will and understanding are faculties of the soul, and if the soul is depraved; it is simply a contradiction in terms to say, the will or understanding could, even if it would, or that it would even if it could, do any thing whatever, so long as the soul continued depraved, which was inconsistent with that depravity. The barrier of nature cannot be surmounted except under a force which transcends nature. We cannot extricate ourselves from the pollution of sin, and from the impotence which that pollution begets, except by the grace of God. The sacrifice of Christ, the work of the Spirit, the word of God, the means of grace: these are the remedy. And Faith in Jesus Christ, is the proof that they are effectual.[1]

III.—1. In a preceding chapter (chap. iv., Book I.,) when explaining the special conditions of the Covenant of Redemption, considered as special obligations binding upon sinners for whom God has provided a Saviour, it became necessary to discuss generally, and to exhibit summarily, the nature of Saving Faith and of Repentance unto life, with the Scripture proofs of both. I shall not repeat here what I have advanced in that chapter. In general, Faith has immediate relevancy, *first*, to Christ who is the author and finisher of it, and, *secondly*, to divine truth as the remedy for the diseased soul: while Repentance has immediate relevancy, *first*, to the disease of the soul itself, and, *secondly*, to our Creator who is outraged by it, and to our Saviour who heals it. The two graces cover the whole case, in its ruin, in its remedy, and in its actual cure. Considered subjectively, that is, as wrought in us, and considered savingly, that is, as having Christ crucified for its object, Faith is

[1] 2 Cor., x. 4, 5.

to be viewed under several distinct aspects, if we would escape confusion in our conception of its whole scope. (*a*) It is a condition of the Covenant of Redemption, without which salvation through grace is not only impossible, but inconceivable: and, in like manner, is not only a duty, but the first and constant duty of every sinner of the human race, to whom the knowledge of the divine Saviour comes. (*b*) It is the particular grace of the divine Spirit, by the exercise of which the renewed soul is united to Christ in its Effectual Calling; by the exercise of which it receives, in its Justification, the righteousness of Christ imputed to it; and by the exercise of which the virtue of Christ as Mediator, flows to all those thus united to him, and having this communion with him. (*c*) It is a gracious habit of the renewed soul, produced in all penitent and believing sinners, by the Spirit and word of God: a habit of soul peculiar to them—being a vital manifestation of their New Creation: a habit of which the whole soul is the seat—by means whereof every Christian grace is strengthened—and the work of God within us carried on to perfection. It is the first of these three aspects which has been particularly considered, in the chapter before referred to: the second aspect has been particularly treated several times: (chapters vi., vii., viii., ix., Book II.:) and the third aspect of it has been constantly involved in all the subjects discussed in the second Book, and is more especially fundamental in the enquiries pursued in the last three chapters of it, (chapters x., xi., xii., Book II.)

2. This gracious habit of the renewed soul, and this bearing of Faith towards all other Christian graces, and towards the whole work of God within us, and all the acts of God toward us: all combine to point out to us with great clearness, the nature, use, and effects of this grace itself. The same thing is true, if extending the enquiry we consider its relation to each person of the Godhead, its dependence upon the word of God, its connection with the means of grace, and its relevancy to the New Creature. The result of a survey of that description—the details of which make up so large a part of all evangelical preaching—may be summarily and briefly stated—for the present necessity. (*a*) The nature of Saving Faith is, that it is the primeval, continual, and characteristic manifestation of the New Creature: the fundamental evidence of the commencement and continuance

of the life of God in the soul of a regenerated sinner. (*b*) Its use is, to unite the renewed soul to the divine Redeemer, who was crucified for it;—to enable the soul thus united to him to have communion with him in this life, both in grace and in glory, and communion through him with the saints of God in love; and to enable it, in this communion with Christ in this life, to receive from him and through him, every blessing and every benefit of the Covenant of Redemption. (*c*) Its effect is, that we receive the salvation of our soul—which is the very end of our Faith: being completely prepared thereto by continual growth in grace, through the use and increase of Faith in our communion with Christ: the saving light in our understanding, the knowledge and apprehension of saving mysteries, the inclining of our will to God, and the conforming of it unto him, the purification of our desires, the sanctification of our conscience, and the moving of our heart and soul unto God, being all advanced and perfected more and more: God, who wrought Faith at first in our heart, working by it in the heart afterwards, and causing the renewed heart itself to work by it towards God.[1] Can any thing be more simple, more complete, more effectual, more gracious?

3. The object of God's revelation to sinful men is, that we may know the infinite evil of our condition—may be shown the way of deliverance—and may be actually delivered. Christ Jesus, the sole and perfect cause of the salvation revealed to us, is therefore the sum of the revelation of God: and Faith in his name is the only way whereby we can obtain the salvation revealed in him. It is perfectly manifest, therefore, that this Saviour and this revelation of him, are the exclusive objects with which this Faith is concerned; and that with both these its concern is incessant. We objectify the substance of this blessed revelation, and call it, the Faith; but in doing so it is at our peril, that we add nothing, and that we take nothing away. We also subjectify that great system of divine truth, and apply the word Faith to the whole inward condition of the soul, answering to that whole revealed salvation; but again, it is at our peril, that herein we must so act as to have the answer of a good conscience toward God. The knowledge and conviction of the reality of our sins, and of the truth, goodness and faithfulness of God

[1] Eph., i. 19—ii. 8; Phil., i. 29; Ezek., xxxvi. 26; Rom., x. 10; John, vi. 44.

in his proposals of deliverance to us, are manifestly at the foundation of our Faith in Christ as our Saviour. Upon this the Scriptures continually insist.[1] Nor are that knowledge and that conviction, however indispensable they may be and however real, sufficient of themselves. To be saved, we must actually embrace the salvation, which we know we need, and which we know to be attainable.[2] Nay, we must embrace it and him who bestows it on us, as the only salvation and the only Saviour: resting on him alone, believing in him alone; confidently, joyfully risking our souls upon him. We may, if it pleases us, call the knowledge and conviction of which I have spoken, the first act of Faith; the embracing the offered salvation the second; and the unreserved and exclusive resting on Christ, the third. Many do so. That last, however, is true Faith; the direct act of the renewed soul, which convinced of its sin, misery, and impotence—believing and trusting God—receives and rests upon Christ alone for salvation.[3] Did Christ ever cast out any who came thus to him? He said he would in no wise do it![4]

4. Intimate as the connection is between Faith and the existence and growth of other Christian graces; and between Faith and righteousness, both imputed and inherent; it is far from being true that Faith is the efficient cause of the existence or the growth of any other grace—or of the growth of the soul in grace; far from being true that Faith itself is the righteousness we need, or that it is imparted to us as if it were that righteousness, or that it produces that righteousness. None of these things are true: nor is it possible to accept either of them as true, without subverting Faith itself, and rendering the whole work of divine grace in man inexplicable. The soul of man is renewed by the Holy Ghost: the cause of the renewal of that particular soul, is that Christ has redeemed it by his most precious blood: the manner of the renewal is, the application to it by the Spirit of the virtue of Christ's Mediation. Being renewed, its new life manifests itself in Faith towards Jesus Christ, and in all other Christian graces: and the threefold aspect of Faith, and the nature, use, and effect of Faith, have all been carefully explained. All Christian graces are fruits of the Spirit—all are vital manifestations of the New Creature—all are results of our communion

[1] Is., liii. 11; Jno., xvii. 13; 1 Pet., iii. 15. [2] Jno., iii. 33; Matt., xi. 28; Col., ii. 6.
[3] Gal., ii. 20; Heb., iv. 16; Eph., iii. 12. [4] John, vi. 37.

with Christ—all are products of the virtue of his Mediation. Their existence and their growth, and the growth of the soul in grace, depend upon Christ as the cause, and upon the Spirit as the agent, and upon the word of God and the instituted means of grace as instruments, so far as any instruments are used: Faith as it is a grace itself, ranking with the rest—and as it is a grace having peculiar functions, which have been explained, acting according to them. With regard to righteousness, the righteousness we need, whether imputed or inherent, is the righteousness of Christ, not the pretended righteousness of our Faith: the righteousness of Christ's person as Immanuel—the righteousness of the Mediator's obedience and that of his sacrifice as Immanuel. And the relevancy of our Faith thereto is, that being related by it to Christ, as repeatedly explained, by means of it that righteousness is both imputed to us and wrought in us by God. In some important respects Good Works may indeed be said to be the product of our Faith. But Good Works are really such, only when performed by those already regenerated and justified; that is, of those who have participated in the righteousness of Christ, both imputed and inherent. And even then these Good Works, even with the help of the Faith which prompted them, so far from supplying the place of the divine righteousness we need, do themselves need to be considered as performed by us in Christ, before God can accept them at all. If the New Birth taught throughout the Scriptures, and declared by Christ to be the foundation of eternal life, is accepted as a divine reality; then every thing is clear concerning Faith, as well as every other Christian grace. If that divine regeneration is denied, then all gracious exercises of the soul, in the sense of the Scriptures, are impossible; and all imaginations that would supply their place, whether by outward rites, or mental acts, or any combination of both, are wholly futile.

IV.—1. The relation of Faith to the word of God and to the means of grace, is as distinct as its relation to Christ, to the Holy Ghost, and to the New Creature. The Lord Jesus as Mediator, is no less really our Prophet, than he is our Priest, and our King: and however indispensable it may be that he should redeem us, and that he should subdue us unto himself, it is no less so that he should cause us to know God, and to know him with a divine and infallible knowledge unto salvation. Under every dispensa-

tion the great principle has always been, that whosoever will call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.[1] But to call on him, men must believe in him ; and to believe in him, they must be taught concerning him ; and that teaching must be divinely competent and divinely authorized. And such is the exposition given by God ; and so Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, is the divine conclusion drawn.[2] And with this all Scripture accords. It is in this aspect of the matter, that we readily see the cause of the differences in the degree of Faith in different persons, and in the same person at different times ; the explanation of the growth and decay of Faith, and of the immense variety of emotions and of acts resulting from the exercise of Faith, as one or other divine truth is its special object. In a word, as soon as we accept the idea that Faith is every way affected by means—and as soon as we know exactly what those means are : then—as in every other part of our salvation—these conditions must be estimated, if we would know the whole truth. Thus, while Faith is a grace universal in all believers, and so fundamental that the sinner cannot be saved without it, nor the New Creature exist without manifesting it ; yet it exists in very different degrees, it is liable to be many ways assailed, it may be greatly obscured, and it may be exceedingly strengthened.[3] The whole movement and action of it is supernatural, through special means : not miraculous, nor yet merely natural. Yet in the midst of all vicissitudes and perils, the true believer has an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, which entereth into that within the veil.[4] And he has the shield of Faith, wherewith he shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.[5] And so whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world : and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our Faith.[6]

2. I have several times had occasion to point out, that full assurance of Faith and hope was the privilege of every true believer, in this life ; after which every one ought to hunger and thirst, and in the habitual enjoyment of which, every one should strive to live. To this end, the Apostle expresses the strong desire that every one, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, should go on to perfection ; showing all diligence to the

[1] Joel, ii. 32; Acts, ii. 21 ; Rom., x. 13. [2] Rom., x. 14–17.
[3] Heb., v. 13, 14; Rom., iv. 19, 20; Matt., vi. 30; viii. 10; Luke, xxii. 31, 32.
[4] Heb., vi. 19. [5] Eph., vi. 16. [6] 1 John, v. 4.

full assurance of hope unto the end.[1] The just ought not only to live by Faith; but they ought to draw near to God with a true heart in full assurance of Faith.[2] For the true way to be made partakers of Christ, is to hold fast the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end: and then it is that Christ dwells in us, when we thus hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope unto the end.[3] We ought to be fully persuaded that what God has promised, he is able also to perform: which is precisely the state of soul in which Abraham received the promise, through the righteousness of Faith, and was strong in Faith, giving glory to God.[4] And thus the hearts of God's saints would be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.[5] The Scriptures, however, do not teach that this full assurance of grace and salvation so belongs to the essence of Faith, as that true believers must immediately receive it, or always enjoy it. What justifies us is not Faith in justification, but Faith in Christ. The object of Faith is Christ himself—not any separate work of his, much less any act or quality in us. We must, assuredly, be really justified, before we can have any gracious assurance that we are justified; we must, undoubtedly, have Faith, before we can have any divine assurance that we have it. It is manifest, therefore, that assurance cannot be of the very essence of Faith. Moreover, it is impossible to assert, that God cannot perform for us, any act outward as to us—as for example the acts justifying us and adopting us—without our having an infallible inward conviction that he has done so. What is not so obvious, but what seems equally true, is that it is impossible to say God cannot perform inward works upon the soul—as for example, Regeneration, and progressive Sanctification—without begetting in the soul, at the same time, an infallible and permanent assurance that he has done so. The believer shall be saved: I am a believer: I shall be saved: I have full assurance of Faith: I have full assurance of salvation. Now it is very obvious that the second and fourth statements are not identical, and that the third and fifth are not identical. The Scriptures everywhere recognize

[1] Heb., vi. 1–11. [2] Heb., x. 22, 38. [3] Heb., iii. 6, 14.
[4] Rom., iv. 13, 20, 21. [5] Col., ii. 2, 3.

the difference, and urge us to press forward to the highest attainments, to covet earnestly the best gifts, to labour diligently for crowning tokens of God's love. Nevertheless, our Master, who gently leads the feeble members of his flock, and bears the lambs of it in his own bosom, is far from rejecting the weary and heavy laden who struggle after him, even far off !

3. There is no aspect of true religion which exposes it more distinctly to the great and all prevailing cavil, against the dominion of God and the dependence of man, than any just presentation of the nature of Saving Faith necessarily must. The moral and psychological and ethical systems of unbelief, are irreconcilable with those revealed in the Scriptures. This view of Faith, it is alleged, puts man, in his natural state, in a condition of utter spiritual helplessness, and in doing so assails also his moral freedom. We encounter these cavils everywhere, as soon as salvation by grace is clearly exhibited. Let us answer them once more. If natural men are able to save themselves, let them do it : and then, besides the great advantage they will secure, they will more effectually confute the religion of Jesus than they can ever do it by reasoning. In that case, the word of God is a mighty imposture; and the sacrifice of Christ is either a pure fiction, or an act of atrocious folly. If, however, they mean that they can save themselves only under the plan of salvation, and by virtue of the Mediation of Christ, so explained as to respect human nature ; it is very obvious that what this means is, the denial of the Holy Ghost, and his regenerating work : and if they can save themselves that way, let them do it. Or, if what is meant is, not wholly to deny the divine Spirit, but to allege that through him, God for Christ's sake gives some grace to all men, and that they who use it aright receive more, and so are saved : it is obvious that in this way the sinner, at the crisis, saves himself by his right use of grace given equally to all but only improved by the saved ; and so God, and Christ, and the Spirit, do not save sinners, but do only help them to save themselves. But the Scriptures teach in the clearest manner, and human experience and reason confirm their teachings, that we need divine grace to enable and incline us to improve grace already given to us, as really as we needed the grace first given ; and that at whatever point, and whatever moment, we are left to ourselves, there we fail, and there, if no more help comes, we

perish. To say the help will come, is simply to retract the cavil, and admit the efficacy of sovereign grace. We must save ourselves: or God must save us. There is no middle way, by doing part ourselves, and letting God do part: because the part we do, if of any avail is gracious, and if not gracious is no part of salvation. If God saves sinners, it must be by grace through Faith. If sinners save themselves, it must be by works. The whole question is, by which covenant is salvation for sinners attainable—and under which are we? If we need infinite, efficacious, sovereign, free grace to save us, then we are helpless sinners, and must cry to God for mercy. If we do not need either divine mercy or divine grace, neither have we any need of Faith; because Faith is simply the middle term between a gracious God and helpless sinners. To object, therefore, that sinners should be accounted helpless in the matter of salvation, is simply to deny that they need salvation, or to deny that they are sinners, or both.

4. As to the moral freedom of man, and the efficacy of that freedom unto salvation, I repeat what I have said above. Let the sinner save himself by means of his moral freedom; and his blessedness and the triumph of his cavil will be complete. According to the word of God, and the consent of all penitent sinners, the renewal of the will, as well as the sanctification of the conscience, the change of the heart, and the enlightening of the understanding of the sinner, are indispensable to his salvation: nor is it possible to conceive how it could be otherwise, if his nature is depraved, and if his will is any part of his nature. But if the renewal of the will is indispensable, then the sinner must renew his own will—or God must renew it. But every one knows, and God plainly teaches us, that we cannot renew our will: and, moreover, it cannot be renewed at all without renewing our nature, and we cannot do that. But if the renewal of the will by God is incompatible with the moral freedom of man, then obviously the freedom of the will is incompatible with salvation; because its renewal by God is indispensable to salvation, and its renewal by God is incompatible with its freedom. The cavil, therefore, is absurd in the form of it; it is still more absurd in the matter of it. For it holds for freedom, aversion to God and bondage to sin; and it holds for bondage, likeness to God and freedom from sin; which, in both cases, and in the very

nature of things, is self-contradictious. It follows, necessarily, that the renewal of the will of man by the Spirit of God is not inconsistent with human freedom ; but, on the contrary, is the deliverance of the will of man from fatal bondage, and the restoration of it to the freedom wherein it was created. It follows, moreover, that from the natural state of bondage of the will of fallen man, nothing can flow that is spiritually good ; and by consequence, that every system built on the contrary supposition, must be contrary to truth and holiness. And, finally, it is manifest that the view of Faith and the manner of its production and action, which requires us to contemplate the will of man as already in bondage to sin, and which proposes its renewal in holiness by God's Spirit, is in precise accordance with the only idea of the moral freedom of man, which is consistent with itself, with the nature of things, or with the word of God. This cavil, therefore, as well as the one before considered, is directed, in fact, against the entire spiritual system of God, of man, of sin, and of salvation disclosed in the Scriptures ; and is founded on views wholly erroneous, as to all of them.

5. How high this great grace, the gift of God wrought in the soul by the Holy Ghost, may rise—what glorious evidences may attend it—what inestimable fruits it may produce—what mighty acts it may perform : these are topics which require the meditations of God's people, and the practical enforcement of God's ministers continually, rather than the condensed and systematic statement of a Treatise like this. On the other hand, how low and how limited may be the state of divine knowledge, with which it may be found powerfully associated, in simple and earnest hearts ; and how fervently it may work in them, with a very few of the great truths of God, unto a mighty height of grace : this is neither the place nor the way to determine. So much at least may be asserted, that any just exhibition of the true nature, and use, and effect of Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, must disclose sufficient reason for the great place it occupies in the sacred Scriptures, and the perpetual urgency of all Christian people concerning it. There is no marvel that in the judgment of God, and by the consent of all who have sought his favour in a way acceptable to him, it should be ranked as the first of the two chief offices of true religion.

CHAPTER XIV.

REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD.

I. 1. Connection between Repentance and Faith.—2. Faith competent only to restored sinners.—3. Repentance competent only to believing sinners.—4. New Obedience: Relation of Faith and Repentance thereto.—5. Life, Righteousness, Repentance: Relations between them.—II. 1. The Knowledge of Good and Evil in Man: Relation thereof to his Fall and Recovery.—2. Moral Judgments and Feeling: Effect of Regeneration.—3. Indissoluble connection between our Moral Judgments and Feeling: Effects of Divine Grace.—4. Relation of the Moral Nature of Man to the Spiritual System of the Scriptures; and to that of Atheism.—5. Self-condemnation of the Natural Conscience: Sense of Blameworthiness of the Renewed Conscience: Standard of each.—6. Healthfulness of Conscience—Divine Grace—Repentance.—III. 1. The Law of God: Relation of the Natural Man thereto.—2. The Satisfaction of Christ: His Relation therein to Sinners: theirs to him through Faith and Repentance.—3. Acts of the Penitent Soul: Grief and Hatred for Sin: Turning from it unto God: Purpose of New Obedience.—4. States of the Penitent Soul: Sense of the true Nature of Sin: Apprehension of the Mercy of God in Christ.—5. Intimate Nature of Repentance: Definition of it.—IV. 1. Perpetual Necessity of Repentance.—2. Great Peculiarity of Repentance.—3. Love and Faithfulness of Christ.—4. Wide Connection, Simplicity, and Certainty of the Doctrine taught.

I.—1. The sacred Scriptures continually unite Repentance toward God and Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. And in one of the most affecting incidents of his wonderful ministry, the great Apostle of the Gentiles told the Elders of the Church at Ephesus, that they had personal knowledge from his first coming into Asia, that he had kept back nothing that was profitable, because he had testified continually these two truths, which in a manner sum up the Gospel.[1] Saving Faith—Repentance unto Life: the very terms that qualify them, show their indissoluble union.

2. In his perfect state man was perfectly bound to believe God, and was far more capable of doing so than in his fallen state. Nevertheless, no idea can be formed of man in his perfect state, which presents him to us as capable of exercising what the

[1] Acts, xx. 18–21.

Scriptures intend by Saving Faith. Because this is a state of soul peculiar to man, both after he has fallen and been restored: and in it, the cause, the nature, and the manner both of that fall and that restoration, are involved. The Saviour of believing sinners is the very cause, and the quickener and comforter of penitent sinners is the very agent, and the divine word by which believing and penitent sinners are begotten again is the very instrument, which make the whole matter at once intelligible and real: and without the whole of which it is neither possible nor intelligible.

3. All this is equally true of Repentance, as of Faith. That also, in its very nature and in every complete view which it is possible to take of it, is a state of soul peculiar to a sinner who has both fallen and been restored. As Faith is concerned chiefly with the cause and the manner of the recovery, so Repentance is concerned chiefly with the malady itself and the means and progress of the recovery. Christ and salvation are the great objects of the believing soul: God and our sins are the great objects of the penitent soul. It is perfectly obvious that a soul which was never lost and therefore never had need of a Saviour, never could exercise Saving Faith in Christ; and equally so, that a soul never dead in trespasses and sins could never turn from sin or unto God, with Repentance unto Life. And so the Lord plainly said, I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.[1] And, so also, Repentance unto Life is every way impossible under the Covenant of Works. Impossible if that covenant were perfectly fulfilled by us; because, in that case, we already had life by obedience, and had no sin to repent of. Impossible after we have broken that covenant, because its condition was not repentance but obedience, which condition being broken, the covenant was at an end as a means of life; and, moreover, even if it could have remained as a covenant of life after its breach, it contained no remedy for transgression but punishment, and in its very nature could contain no other.

4. The Covenants of Works and Grace are the most impressive form in which God gives expression to the counsel of his will concerning man. It is through them especially that he makes manifest his infinite goodness, under all the forms in which it is most distinctly exhibited towards man. The will of God, in

[1] Matt., ix. 13.

whatever manner it may be made known, must give expression to his infinite nature. When made known in the form of law, that law is a middle term which necessarily embraces, on one side the infinite author of it, and on the other those subject to it: and in its own nature it necessarily embraces such sanctions as are appropriate to itself, to its author, and to those subject to it. Otherwise we might call it instruction, advice, or persuasion; but not law. But when the will of God is propounded to us in the form of covenant—and the idea of a reward arises, there is superadded to the majesty, wisdom, power, and goodness of the Infinite Ruler of the universe, the expression of his love, his truth, and his faithfulness. So that not only by the whole glory of God's being, but by all else that is immutable added thereto, his covenants must have way in all they command, in all they threaten, and in all they promise; immutable and irresistible alike in their stipulations and in their sanctions. Wherefore God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil: whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.[1] Now the Covenant of Grace stipulates for righteousness on condition of Faith and Repentance, and has for its sanction on that side, the promise of eternal life: whence it follows that believing and penitent sinners must be saved, or the highest expression of God's will must fail.[2] On the other hand, the Covenant of Works stipulated for righteousness on condition of obedience at once perfect and personal, and had for its sanction on that side, the threat of eternal death: whence it follows that the disobedient under that covenant can have no refuge in Faith or Repentance, and no hope of escaping perdition.[3] But in every possible relation of a dependent creature to its Creator, righteousness is inconceivable except in connection with obedience: and salvation in sin is the concealed poison which lurks in every system of false religion. In the nature of the case, therefore, a New Obedience is as directly involved in Faith and Repentance,

[1] Heb., vi. 17–20. [2] John, iii. 16; Luke, xiii. 3–5. [3] Gen., ii. 15–17.

as a New Covenant and a New Creature are. It is through Faith toward Christ that the New Creature is concerned with the cause and manner of this New Obedience: it is through Repentance toward God that the process of perfecting the New Creature therein, is actually carried on in the soul.[1]

5. I have explained in another place the great truth, that the life which any righteousness can secure can only be as full and as enduring as the righteousness by which it is obtained; so that we must have an everlasting righteousness if we would have eternal life; and as this everlasting righteousness can be obtained only through the Lord Jesus Christ, so eternal life is attainable only through him.[2] Nay the very name whereby he was predicted from of old was, *The Lord our Righteousness.**[3] What I then taught was only a corollary from a broader and deeper truth—to which we now come. In every spiritual sense Righteousness is the very expression of life—precisely as sin is the very expression of death. Spiritual death—death in sin, is not only a terrible reality, but it is the cause both of the death of the body, and of the eternal death of the soul and body. Spiritual life is not only a glorious reality, but to fallen man the very expression of it both in its nature and its power, is the participation with our Saviour Jesus Christ, in grace and in glory, of the life and the immortality he has brought to light through the Gospel.[4] Salvation by grace, which expresses the peculiar form of the spiritual and eternal life bestowed on men by Christ, is, therefore, in the nature of the case, impossible; unless by grace, through Faith and Repentance, we are put in actual, personal, and eternal possession of a righteousness commensurate with the salvation bestowed on us. The very term salvation not only involves the idea of a life which is spiritual and eternal; but also that the holiness of that life is commensurate with its spirituality and its eternity. Hundreds of times the Scriptures use merely the word *life*, to express all this; as if no other form of human existence was worthy of being called life.[5] So far are the Scriptures from countenancing any idea that salvation and holiness may be separated—that even after they have revealed and opened unto us an infinite Righteousness through the Son of God; they dis-

[1] Psalm cxix. 111, 112.

* יְהוָה צִדְקֵנוּ—*Jehovah our Righteousness.*

[4] 2 Tim., i. 9, 10.

[2] Dan., ix. 24; Heb., ix. 12.

[3] Jer., xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 16; 1 Cor., i. 30.

[5] John, vi. 53; xi. 25; xx. 31.

tinctly warn us that if our Faith were to make the law void—nay, if it did not establish the law—it would be a fatal objection to our Faith.[1] And yet even that righteousness of the law, thus scrupulously respected, is not the righteousness which is through the faith of Christ; the righteousness which is of God by Faith, which they possess who know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.[2] In all the Scriptures it is the merit of Works and the righteousness of Faith which are contrasted: true righteousness and saving grace are never set in opposition, nor can they be; since the former is always the product of the latter—and to fallen men can be the product of nothing else. The difference is immeasurable between saying that no righteousness of the law or of works can save a sinner—and saying that a sinner can be saved without any righteousness at all: and no pest of Christianity has been more insidious than that, which would substitute any thing—no matter what—for holiness of heart and life. Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, said our Lord, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.[3] Blessed, said he, are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.[4] From which it is a fearful and necessary inference, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord.[5] It is in Christ Jesus the Saviour of the world that everlasting righteousness is provided for lost men. It is through divine grace that this infinite Righteousness is bestowed on penitent sinners. The very highway of the upright is to depart from evil: and Repentance, of a truth, is the King's highway of holiness.[6] This gate, though it be strait—this way, though it be narrow—leadeth unto life. Alas! that there should be few that find it.[7]

II.—1. The shock which the fall of man, and the loss of the image of God, produced upon our nature, is not capable of being completely appreciated by us. We have much certain knowledge on the subject revealed to us by God: we have also the means, in our knowledge of ourselves, both in our natural state and in our begun recovery here on earth—of many reasonable conjectures, perhaps some positive certainty—concerning the original condition of our nature. It is precisely in the spot where the

[1] Rom., iii. 31. [2] Phil., iii. 9, 10. [3] Matt., v. 20. [4] Matt., v. 8.
[5] Heb., xii. 14. [6] Prov., xvi. 17. [7] Matt., vii. 13, 14.

present enquiry finds us, that complete knowledge would be the most satisfying—and complete ignorance the most fatal. The only prohibition to Adam under the Covenant of Works was, that he should not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The penalty annexed by God to sustain this prohibition, was the most immense that could be: forfeiture, on the one side, of all the blessings promised to obedience, and, on the other side, the certainty of death.[1] In the degree that we are now able, with the word of God in our hands, and the experience of the whole life of the human race, to appreciate the fatal effects of the fall of Adam, we are able in the like degree to appreciate the unsuitableness of the knowledge of good and evil, to the nature of man in his original state of innocence and conformity to God. How immeasurable is the difference, then, between his state and ours—and how inadequately do we appreciate what man has lost of good, and incurred of evil, by the fall? For this knowledge of good and evil which was wholly incompatible with our primeval estate—and in the attainment of which we become unfit for the service and enjoyment of God: is, for us, the very point within us upon which all the processes of salvation practically turn. If to know good and evil be, in man, inseparable from his being depraved in the sight of God, it is also inseparable from his possible salvation. For salvation is only for sinners, only for believing and penitent sinners. But Repentance and Faith are both inconceivable, except as acts of a fallen and restored sinner who has the knowledge of good and evil. How wonderful, even in the most rigidly scientific aspects, are those divine harmonies at which weak Christians sometimes tremble—and shallow infidels habitually cavil? We have the knowledge of good and evil—a fatal inheritance—and yet by the infinite grace and wisdom of God, this mark of ruin may be turned into a method of restoration to God. If it were not that we have this sense of good and evil, all idea of sin and of holiness would appear to be impossible, in such beings as we now are; and all increase in either would appear to be inconceivable. To a perfect nature, fallen—this sense of good and evil—real, but obscure and depraved—is an absolute part of its moral constitution. God so declares—our nature so testifies. But let us not forget the limitations with which God and our nature alike testify, that this

[1] Gen., ii. 17.

sense of good and evil is surrounded. It is the sense of a fallen being ; it is of the nature—neither higher nor lower—better nor worse : it is impotent to surmount the barrier of that nature—impotent, like all the rest of that depraved nature, to perform its part otherwise than as depraved. We know that the distinction between good and evil is real and ineffaceable, just as certainly as we know that the distinction between true and false is real and ineffaceable. But we do not know with certainty which things are good and which are evil, any more than which are true and which are false. We are depraved, and have lost the image of God in knowledge, in righteousness, and in holiness. But though depraved, we are still both rational and moral—and, blessed be God, capable, through divine grace, of a glorious restoration.

2. Connected with this sense of good and evil, in all our practical exercises of it, there is a feeling of approbation and satisfaction towards that which we perceive and recognize as good, whether it is manifested in ourself, or in others ; a feeling of aversion and condemnation towards whatever appears to us to be evil, whether in ourself or others. If our moral judgments were infallible, our approval and our aversion would necessarily be directed always to the proper objects ; that is, if our sense of right and wrong never erred, our feeling responsive to that sense could never be directed amiss. On the other hand, if our moral judgments always erred, our approval and our disapprobation would always be directed amiss. In temporal and common things, neither of these states of our moral nature exists : as to them, our moral judgments are sometimes right and sometimes wrong, and by consequence, our feeling of satisfaction and of aversion is sometimes just and sometimes misdirected. With regard to spiritual things connected with grace and salvation, the second of the two states above defined is universal in the natural man, considered as depraved ; that is, the moral judgments and the consequent feeling of the natural man, are always different from those of God—always wrong on those subjects. The nature of man is extricated from this terrible condition by a divine Regeneration, and in the degree it is sanctified through divine grace it approximates the first of the two conditions defined above : but as it never attains perfect deliverance from the remains of indwelling sin in this life, it never arrives at a condition in which

its moral sense and moral feeling are absolutely just with regard to spiritual things. Whatever may have been the precise state of the moral nature of man before his fall, and therefore before he had the knowledge of good and evil as we have it in the depraved condition of our nature: this much we know with certainty, namely, that the mere fallibility of his perfect nature was sufficient to lead him fatally astray in his moral judgment, and by consequence in the feeling connected with it. It may help to guide our enquiries into the cause of that catastrophe, and into the principle upon which it rests, to bear in mind that the sin of Adam was not spontaneous, but was the result of most subtle temptation and deceit; and, moreover, that his particular transgression had reference to a positive command concerning that which, independently of the command, had no moral quality. Situated as we are, naturally polluted and also destitute of grace, it is wholly impossible for us either to judge, or feel, or act, in a manner perfectly consonant with any rule of rectitude: while it is equally impossible to estimate the greatness of the departures which we might finally make from every such rule.

3. The connection between our moral approbation and our sense of the goodness of that which we approve, and between our moral disapprobation and our sense of the evil of that which we condemn, is so deeply seated in our nature; that it is impossible for these feelings to arise independently of the moral judgments which precede them—and impossible for them to be contrary to those judgments. Our passions may carry us away—and the violence of temptation may overcome us—and the heart may be utterly hardened and the understanding wholly darkened—and the conscience completely seared. Nevertheless, so long as we perceive that there is a difference between right and wrong—and determine any thing in particular to be right—we are totally incapable of disapproving it as right, while we consider it right. We may err in our moral judgment—call good evil and evil good: the real question as to the feeling which will be begotten in us is, not whether we judge correctly, but how do the things of which we judge appear to our moral sense? The phenomena will follow in every case. We may hate good, but this is because it appears to us to be evil: we may love evil, but this is because evil appears to us good. We often do what we judge to be wrong: but never without a sense of self-condemna-

tion: and that sense of condemnation may be most acute, when our moral judgment is utterly mistaken. Whatever the conscience declares the thing to be, that it must necessarily be to us, so far as our approval or disapproval is concerned, and so far as a feeling of satisfaction or aversion is begotten in us thereby. A depraved moral sense is as real and as comprehensible, as any other depraved faculty or power in human nature: and the phenomena it exhibits give us clear views of the manner in which divine truth is made instrumental in the sanctification of the conscience. Nor can there be any more doubt that the dictates of conscience should be followed, than that the dictates of reason should be, each in its own sphere. Even our sinful nature revolts at our doing what appears to it to be wrong: and never ceases to chide us for so doing, until the conscience is deadened by this very process of disobeying its admonitions. It is equally idle to assert that the moral judgment is right merely because it seems to us to be right: and to assert that we are to disregard its decisions, because others know them to be erroneous. This is our fatal condition as fallen creatures.[1] Of ourselves, we may mitigate it to a certain degree: but the grace of God and the work of the Holy Ghost is the only cure: and the prime end of the Knowledge of God and of all the means of grace whereby that knowledge is made effectual, is the sanctification of the conscience, the healing of the moral nature of man. Nor is there any poison of all false religion more deadly, nor any impotence of it all more fatal, than its uniform tendency to misdirect our moral sense, its total inability to rectify our moral judgments. The scriptural method of dealing with this transcendently important aspect of our fallen nature, is expressed by the phrase, Repentance toward God.

4. Upon the supposition that the scriptural account of the being and perfections of God—of the work of creation and grace—of the nature, fall, and present condition of man—is true; then all these characteristics of our being are completely accounted for—and the effects of sin and of grace upon us are perfectly comprehensible. For an infinite standard of all good is erected in the universe—the ineffaceable distinction between good and evil exterior to us is firmly established—the capacity of a fallen soul created in the image of God to perceive and to be affected

[1] Prov., xiv. 12—xv. 25.

by that eternal distinction, without being able to apply it truly and justly, ceases to be a marvel,—and its capacity to be restored by divine grace, becomes obvious in the very statement of the case. The moral nature of man is an immense truth whose existence cannot be denied—because it is more certain to man than any thing can be which can be brought forward to disprove it. But considered apart from the idea of the existence of an infinite Creator and moral Ruler of the universe, that moral nature of man is the grossest of all absurdities. It is the perpetual testimony of the only being capable of discerning truth, to the greatest of all imaginable falsehoods, namely, that right and wrong are eternal realities—when no such things exist. What is still more monstrous, it is the invincible assertion of nature in her highest form—the human soul—that the highest satisfaction and the acutest misery are the product of that, namely, moral good and evil, which nature knows perfectly well has no existence. And to crown the whole, if the soul itself does not exist—which manifestly it cannot do if there is no God—then a fortuitous organization of matter, which we call man—being without a soul and without a Creator—is endowed with the very attributes with which God—if there was a God—would endow a soul, if he could create one: and all to no end but the demonstration that effects exceed their proper cause, which is axiomatically impossible.

5. There is no state of the human soul which more uniformly attends every part of our progress, from our state of ruin to a state of endless blessedness, than the sense of our own blameworthiness. I have shown how a sense of disapprobation arises in the natural heart, when we do what appears to our moral sense to be wrong. The very earliest gracious operations of God's Spirit in our hearts, awaken us to a sense of our guilt and danger in his sight. This is one of the multiplied instances in which there is a certain resemblance, between the operations of the soul when naturally and when graciously affected. That men should habitually do what the natural heart condemns,—and that even they who are born again should be in constant peril of backsliding; are proofs of the impotence of our moral nature—not less signal than our inability to distinguish clearly what particular things are good and what evil. Nor is there, in our whole being, any thing more decisive and remarkable than this natural

sense of self-condemnation—and this gracious sense of blameworthiness. In the former case, nature herself furnishes the standard of our moral judgment—that law written by God upon the heart of man at his creation, and summed up by him twenty-five centuries afterwards upon tables of stone at Sinai. It is thus that we are a law unto ourselves, our conscience also bearing witness, and our thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.[1] But this gracious sense of blameworthiness in us, must have a better standard than our fallen nature, by which its judgment must be regulated. The higher and purer that standard is, the deeper and keener will our sense of our shortcomings be. So that in the penitent sinner, this sense of his blameworthiness is in proportion to the sum of three forces; namely, his knowledge of God, the perfect rule of Righteousness; his knowledge of himself, concerning whom the judgment of self-condemnation is to be passed; and the healthful state of the conscience, whose disapprobation is the very judgment which is passed. That judgment is, that our heart is not right in the sight of God: and if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.[2] It is manifest that all three of the elements just enumerated, which enter into the sense of blameworthiness of a penitent sinner, ought to increase continually; and, therefore, our sense of blameworthiness would itself increase continually, unless we ourselves increased continually in holiness, that is, in conformity to God. If our conscience bear us witness in the Holy Ghost, that we do thus increase in holiness,[3] then, indeed, having the answer of a good conscience toward God,[4] we may well and truly rejoice in this testimony of our conscience.[5] But inasmuch as we can never attain to perfect holiness in this life, we can never cease to feel a sense of blameworthiness at every just survey of our actual condition. To which it must be added, that upon every survey of our past life, the renewed soul will deplore its past offences more and more deeply, at every step of its progressive sanctification.

6. The root of the matter is the healthful state of the conscience itself. And to every spiritual intent touching grace and salvation, there is no state of the conscience which can be called healthful, except that state of it which exists in the New Crea-

[1] Rom., ii. 14, 15. [2] 1 John, iii. 20. [3] Rom., ix. 1.
[4] 1 Pet., iii. 21. [5] 2 Cor., i. 12.

ture. This we express with reference to the matter now under consideration, by the phrase—Repentance unto Life: it is a grace of God's Spirit—an act of the renewed soul. It is only when the soul has been quickened by the Holy Ghost, that its spiritual judgments concerning good and evil are trustworthy. It is only in such a quickened soul that divine truth is so perceived, that it can be made an infallibly just standard of approbation or condemnation. It is only as that quickened soul advances in holiness, by means of this life-giving Spirit and this divine truth, that it is wrought more and more perfectly into a condition of complete healthfulness. Then it is that its judgment concerning good and evil, its sense of approbation or condemnation, its feeling of peace or shame under its own sentence, become more and more analogous to the mind of God. The extraordinary fact, to which I have already alluded, that the habitual judgment of the natural conscience is one of condemnation of our own habitual moral state—or at the least of doubt concerning it—or of most hesitating approval; obliges us to admit not only that sinfulness may be predicated of nature, in contradistinction to acts, but that our own nature is sinful; or else we must show that our moral judgments, and therefore our sense of disapprobation, are always wrong—in which case the only use of the conscience would be to lead us into sin. Under the influence of divine grace, the pungency of our convictions must necessarily be in proportion to the heinousness of our offences and the depth of our depravity. And here is opened before us the whole of that immense department of practical religion connected with the direction of the conscience; in which the doctrines of grace are so conspicuously blessed, and all other systems are fatal, each in proportion to its departure from them. I content myself with making two remarks, both relating immediately to the doctrine of Repentance. The *first* is, that in proportion as our convictions of sin are inadequate, is the peril of backsliding, on one hand—and the certainty on the other, of low attainments in the divine life. The *second* is, that it is a double and woful mistake, for those who cannot charge themselves with outbreaking enormities, to distrust the Spirit of God, because he does not enable them to abhor themselves as if they had been stained with the greatest crimes; and for such as might justly rank themselves with the chief of sinners, to be content with such convictions of sin as

would become them, if they had only heart hatred against God to charge themselves withal. God's Spirit is the Spirit of truth: and the exercises of soul which he begets, are always true exercises—never exaggerated—never fallacious.

III.—1. God has provided for man a perfect rule of duty, and therefore a perfect standard for the conscience—in the Moral Law—which he wrote in the heart of man when he created him—which he delivered in writing to Moses to be laid at the foundation of the sacred Scriptures—and which is divinely expounded and enforced throughout the inspired volume.[1] Although every violation of that unalterable law is not equally heinous, yet every violation of it deserves the wrath of God.[2] In our fallen state we neither desire nor are able to keep this perfect law of God.[3] We are by nature, therefore, children of wrath,[4] not only dead in sins, but sold under sin.[5] Even after we have come to the knowledge of this perfect rule of duty, there is no possibility that depraved sinners should be purified thereby, or through it escape perdition; unless they are first divinely enabled and inclined thereunto. A rule of duty, of judgment, of conviction, of condemnation, of punishment—it abides and will abide for ever. But by no possibility can it be a way of Life, through the keeping of it, unto depraved creatures who lie under its curse, who have already incurred its wrath, and who are only the more sure to be condemned, by how much it is proved to be holy, just, and good. It may be, under such circumstances, our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith.[6] But this is the utmost it can do for sinners; and this only through divine grace.

2. The perfect obedience to the law of God both in heart and life, by which complete conformity to the will of God is manifested—has been rendered by the Lord Jesus, in his office of Mediator between God and man. He has, in addition, endured the penalty and curse of the law, and the wrath of God due to sinners—as though he were himself the chief of sinners: whereby he has made complete satisfaction to divine justice, and redeemed his brethren who were under the law, and under sin, and under the sentence of death, and under the power of Satan. All this has occurred in execution of the Covenant of Redemption—whose blessings and benefits are all pro-

[1] Exod., xx.; Matt., xxii. 37–40. [2] Gal., iii. 10. [3] Gal., ii. 16.
[4] Eph., ii. 3. [5] Eph., ii. 1; Rom., vii. 14. [6] Gal., iii. 24.

vided by divine grace, for fallen men, through the Son of Man. If we can become so identified with this crucified and exalted Saviour as to be partakers of his destiny; and if we are willing to share his sufferings that we may also share his resurrection; then, obviously, our whole case is put in a totally new aspect. Upon supposition of such a union between him and us as will put him in our place as sinners, that he may work out for us an everlasting righteousness—and put us in his place as possessors of this divine righteousness; manifestly, sin, and the law, and death, and hell—must hold him responsible for all they have to allege against us; and his person, and work, and glory must all be overborne before we can be hurt. We must, to this end, be united to Christ; concerning which, and the manner of it, I have said so much. The incontestable manifestations of this union between us and the Saviour of the world—are declared to be Repentance toward God and Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ.[1] These are the immediate and universal obligations laid upon sinners by the manifestation of a Saviour to them; they are the special conditions of salvation through that Saviour, and under the eternal covenant sealed with his blood. With reference to God, to sin, and to itself—the precise state of the believing soul is—Repentance; just as the precise state of the penitent soul, with reference to Christ, to divine truth, and to salvation, is—Faith. But the ideas of God, and sin, and the soul, in the first of these statements, and those of Christ, and divine truth, and salvation in the second; unitedly present a complete idea of the whole matter. Repentance and Faith unitedly involving the whole of those ideas—unitedly express the whole way of life. They are, therefore, peculiar to those who are united to Christ—universal, in all who are born of the Spirit—and inseparable from each other.[2]

3. The acts of the renewed soul which unitedly make up the idea which we use the word Repentance to express, are very clearly disclosed in the word of God, are very obvious in themselves, and are familiar to all Christians. In the *first* place, the penitent soul grieves for its sins and at the same time sincerely hates them. For, saith the Scriptures, Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and for your abominations.[3] And this is just what the Lord requires

[1] Acts, xx. 20, 21. [2] Mark, i. 15; John, iii. 18; Luke, xiii. 3, 5. [3] Ezek., xxxvi. 31.

of us. For not only is repentance and remission of sins to be preached in the name of the Lord Jesus among all nations ;[1] and not only does God command all men every where to repent ;[2] but the clearest statements are made as to what occurs when this blessed Gospel and this divine command work together effectually in our hearts. Thus it is said, Repent and turn from all your transgressions: and so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed ; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel ?[3] The sorrow of the world worketh death: but godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of. And this the Apostle applies personally to us, for he saith, Behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea what revenge. In all things ye have proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.[4] In the *second* place, the penitent soul, grieving for and hating its sins, turns from all sin unto God. For, saith God, Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him ; and to our God for he will abundantly pardon.[5] And to this God himself persuades us: for it is written, Wash ye, make ye clean ; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes ; cease to do evil ; learn to do well; seek judgment; relieve the oppressed; judge the fatherless ; plead for the widow. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.[6] So we are divinely assured that there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.[7] And so the very purpose for which Saul of Tarsus was sent of God unto the Gentiles was, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance amongst those that are sanctified.[8] And thus all who sin against God—for there is no man that sinneth not—and at whom God is angry ; yet if

[2] Luke, xxiv. 47.
[3] Acts, xvii. 30.
[4] Ezek., xviii. 30, 31.
[5] 2 Cor., vii. 10, 11 ; Jer., xxxi. 18, 19.
[6] Isa., lv. 7.
[7] Isa., i. 16–20.
[8] Rom., viii. 1.
[9] Acts, xxvi. 14–18.

they bethink themselves, and repent, and make supplication unto God, saying, we have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness; and so return unto God with all their heart, and with all their soul: then will God hear their prayer and their supplication, in heaven his dwelling-place, and will forgive all their sins against him, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against him.[1] In the *third* place, the penitent soul, grieving for its sins, hating them, and turning from them unto God, does this with full purpose of heart, and earnest endeavour after New Obedience. I thought upon my ways, says the Psalmist, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. For, he adds, I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way.[2] It is they who walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the law blameless, whom the Scriptures pronounce to be righteous:[3] and he through whose grace they are both inclined and enabled thereunto, is not only chiefest among ten thousand, but is altogether lovely.[4] Follow me, is the incessant command of the Saviour of men.[5] The very characteristic of the sheep of the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, is that they hear his voice and follow him: and the end is, not only that he gives unto them eternal life—but that the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keeps their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.[6] Now we easily unite in one conception the several acts of the soul with regard to sin, to God, and to itself: and the result is that which is called sometimes Repentance toward God, sometimes Repentance unto Life, most generally simply Repentance. The Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, use two different words to express this great grace of the Spirit.* They are used, especially in the New Testament, so nearly interchangeably,[7] that nothing farther need be said here concerning them, than that one of them, perhaps, has more special relation to the understanding, and the other to the will of man: as the careful student will probably observe in noting their use by the sacred writers. What God requires in sinful man is a thorough change of soul; and touching the subject of our inquiry—a thorough change both of purpose and desire, from the evil which God hates to the good which God loves.[8]

[1] 1 Kings, viii. 46–50. [2] Psalm cxix. 59, 128. [3] Luke, i. 6. [4] Song of Sol., v. 10, 16.
[5] Matt., xvi., 24; Luke, ix. 50. [6] John, x. 27, 28; Phil., iv. 7.
* נחם—*μετᾶμελεία*—mutatio voluntatis: שוּבָה—*μετανοία*—mutatio mentis.—*Repentance.* [7] Matt., xi. 21; xxi. 29, 32. [8] Rom., xii. 1, 2; Ps. i. *passim.*

4. The states of the soul whose acts have just been explained, or, if a different manner of stating the case is preferred—the exercises of the soul in Repentance—are distinctly twofold. In the *first* place it has obtained and it manifests, both a sight and a sense, both of the danger and the odiousness of sin, as contrary to the holy nature, and righteous law of God. And in the *second* place it has apprehended the mercy of God in Christ to penitent sinners. It is by the word and Spirit of God that it has been brought to see and to feel thus :[1] and seeing and feeling thus, it hates and grieves for its sins, and turns from them unto God, as I have pointed out in the preceding paragraph. In the parable of the Prodigal Son, the Saviour has shown us in the most affecting manner, the nature of these states and exercises of the soul—the acts to which they prompt us, and the reception which the returning penitent meets with from God.[2] His dogmatic statement is more wonderful, if possible, than his overpowering illustration ; for he says with emphasis, There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.[3] With this declaration and exposition of the Saviour, the whole Scriptures agree.[4]

5. The intimate nature of all these states, exercises, and acts of the soul, and of the cause and manner of their occurrence, may be briefly and distinctly stated. 1. Repentance unto life is a special obligation of sinful men, and a special condition of God's favour under the Covenant of Redemption, precisely as perfect obedience was under the Covenant of Works. 2. It is a saving grace which God bestows on men—wrought in the heart of the sinner by the Holy Ghost as the agent, and the word of God as the instrument thereof. 3. It is an act of the New Creature, unto the right performance of which all the outward ordinances of the Church of God enable us ; in the due exercise of which all other Christian graces are nourished ; and in the absence of which we can have no just hope of eternal life, nor any true fitness for it.[5] Repentance unto life, therefore, as taught in the word of God, and as experienced in the hearts of all believers, is a vital manifestation of the New Creature, being a permanent habit of the renewed soul, wrought by the Holy Ghost in the elect of God, for the merits' sake of Jesus Christ, whereby it

[1] Zech., xii. 10; Acts, ii. 37; xi. 18–21. [2] Luke, xv. 11–32. [3] Luke, xv. 10.
[4] Ezekiel, xvi. 60–63; xviii. 30–32; Psalm cxxx. *passim;* Joel, ii. 12–14.
[5] Acts, ii. 37–43; 2 Tim., ii. 25, 26; Zech., xii. 9–11; Matt., xxviii. 18–20; 1 Tim., iv. 14–16.

hates and overcomes sin, in the way of a new obedience unto the holy law of God: the fruits whereof are, through divine grace, pardon, all good works, and a portion in eternal life.[1]

IV.—1. I abhor myself, said Job, and repent in dust and ashes.[2] And such is the continual necessity of fallen men returning to God—the perpetual doctrine of godliness. John the Baptist, the messenger sent to prepare the way of the Lord, came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.[3] And as soon as John's ministry was accomplished, Jesus began to preach the Gospel of the kingdom of God, saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel.[4] And when he called the twelve Apostles and began to send them forth by two and two, with power over unclean spirits; they went out and preached that men should repent.[5] The very object of the coming of Jesus, as declared by himself, was, to call sinners to Repentance:[6] and after his resurrection—opening the understanding of his Apostles that they might understand the Scriptures, he said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.[7] In the same sense, precisely, did the Apostles commence their divine mission, and accomplish it to the end. On the day of Pentecost, when the promise of the Father had been accomplished, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and the thousands who were pricked in their heart under the preaching of Peter demanded what they were to do: the answer was, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.[8] And a few days afterwards, to like multitudes, in the same place, the first miracle wrought directly by the Apostles was followed by the same doctrine and the same effects as had attended the great miracle of tongues wrought on them at Pentecost. Repent ye, therefore, said Peter to the multitudes as they ran together, filled with wonder and amazement, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.[9] So that nothing is more certain than that

[1] Rom., xii. *passim;* 1 Pet., i. *passim;* Acts, xi. 18; Matt, iii. 8.
[2] Job, xlii. 6. [3] Matt., iii. 1, 2. [4] Matt., iv. 17; Mark, i. 14, 15.
[5] Mark, vi. 12. [6] Matt., ix. 13; Mark, ii. 17; Luke, v. 32.
[7] Luke, xxiv. 45, 46. [8] Acts, ii. 38. [9] Acts, iii. 19.

God commandeth all men everywhere to repent: and that except we do repent we shall all likewise perish.[1] Nor are true believers to suppose that they are exempt from this great duty—this universal necessity. Even if we have well grounded confidence that the sins of which we should be so much ashamed have been pardoned by God, still we ought to feel the deepest sorrow that we have committed them. We ought, indeed, to be the more earnest in our desires and endeavours after holiness, as we thus apprehend more clearly God's mercy in our pardon. Moreover, we know little of ourselves, if we do not know that we have daily need to repent of our daily offences against the holy law of God: and that but for the infinite sufficiency of Christ, we are, at our best estate, unworthy and unfit to appear before God, and would either sink down into total indifference to divine things, or fall into despair. Nor without Repentance is it possible for us to grow in holiness. For in order to obtain the victory over temptation, we must have some adequate sight and sense of the danger and hatefulness of sin: and in order to increase in conformity to God, we must see the excellence of the grace we long for, and mourning for the lack of it, must strive for its attainment in higher measure.

2. Of all Christian graces, this alone is attended with anguish of heart, and deep spiritual suffering. Being a gift of the Holy Spirit, and an exercise of the new life of God's children, we might suppose that we could have been delivered in some way from these sharp pangs of the soul, in the very exercise, and manifestation, and increase of the life which we share with the Lord from heaven. Doubtless this would have been the case, if man, instead of God, had provided the way of life. It is the case in every human way of deliverance from sin: all, without exception, seeking to allay our sense of guilt: all, without exception, misdirecting that just self-condemnation which refuses to be allayed. We ought to consider how great is the difference between the object with which this grace immediately concerns itself, and the objects with which all other graces are immediately concerned. It is our sins in all their danger and hatefulness—ourselves in all our blameworthiness on account of sin—that the soul contemplates when it repents. In the nature of the case, its self-condemnation and its anguish must go together.

[1] Acts, xviii. 30; Luke, xiii. 3.

It is the disease which makes the remedy so sharp. These pangs of the renewed soul on account of its sins, which Christ has borne in his own body on the cross, and then pardoned, are inevitable effects of those sins upon the soul, as it struggles to extricate itself from their pollution and bondage. Left to themselves, first stupor, and then horror and despair, are what they inflict upon the soul. Rooted out by divine grace, grief and shame attend their destruction. The soul is of that nature, and sin affects it in that manner, that one way or other every soul which sin enters must suffer: suffer eternally under its dominion, or suffer—what is not worthy to be compared with the fire that shall never be quenched, and the worm that shall never die—as the balm that is in Gilead is applied by the great Physician of souls to heal their fearful maladies. In the nature of the case, in the nature both of the disease and the remedy, in the nature both of God and man, it could not be otherwise. It is a necessity which belongs to our fearful condition as sinful creatures. And the perfect recognition of it, and the effectual treatment of it, by the sacred Scriptures, is one of those innumerable proofs of their divine wisdom, which come silently into the thoughtful soul, along with the truth itself.

3. It is, however, very far from true, to suppose there is nothing to sweeten these deep sorrows, and to assuage these bitter pangs. For a sense of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, is as real a part of true Repentance, as hatred, and shame, and sorrow for sin are. Let the conviction of sin go to the very depths of the soul, for the malady goes there—and the remedy must go too, if the cure is perfect. Still every sigh and every tear wrung from the penitent child of God, is poured out on the bosom of the Saviour of sinners. The balm which he pours into the wounded soul does heal it—does comfort it: it is the pollution which it expels, that tears it. The deep waters as they roll over us, and the fiery trials as they almost consume in refining us—do not weaken, but do confirm the assurance that his everlasting arms are underneath us and round about us. The cry of the suffering soul is, Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.[1] The answer of the Lord is—I will not leave thee—I will not forsake thee—I will not cast thee off.[2]

4. How much concerning God, concerning man, and concern-

[1] Job, xiii. 15. [2] Gen., xxviii. 15; 1 Sam., xii. 22; Ps. xciv. 14.

ing the relations between them, is involved in what must be accepted as true in order to exhibit clearly this great Scripture doctrine! How completely must the whole proportion of divine faith lie open before us, in order to appreciate fully the revealed method of our pardon, and the grounds and effects thereof! And yet, of itself, how simple and obvious is the truth, that in order to be pardoned we must forsake our sins and turn to God, and that if we will not do this we must perish! And yet, once more, with what light and triumph do the doctrines of grace, so simple in themselves, so deep and wide in their connections, come forth always from the most thorough and severe trial of them! Thus what we have sought to explain and establish in this chapter, involves the absolute nature of God as revealed—the absolute truth of the revelation of him—the reality and efficacy of the plan of salvation therein disclosed—and the mode of the divine existence revealed in accordance with that method of saving sinners. On the other hand, it involves the absolute truth of all that relates to the creation, fall, nature, present condition, and endless destiny of man: the absolute truth, also, of the spiritual system disclosed unto salvation, and the divine authority of the means of its enforcement—sin—holiness—the covenants—grace —knowledge—ordinances. All is true—all is real: or else all is worthless, and the whole scriptural conception of Repentance is inexplicable—absurd—unreal. In all such cases two immoveable supports remain to the Christian heart. It has, in its own inner life, that which attests the certainty of these great truths of God. It has in the universal experience of the human race, and in the surest conclusions of the human understanding, that which attests the futility of all other methods ever suggested to men, whereby sinners might escape the wrath to come.

CHAPTER XV.

THE NEW OBEDIENCE.

I. 1. What God purposes concerning his Children.—2. What he requires of them.—3. What he is preparing them for—and how.—4. The New Obedience: with the Relation of Good Works and the Christian Warfare thereto.—II. 1. The New Obedience, in its Inward Nature: whole Work of the Divine Spirit, as related to all Gracious Exercises of the Renewed Soul.—2. Duty toward God—specially embraced in the Internal Aspect of our New Obedience: Influence of this on our duty to our Neighbour.—3. New Obedience as rendered to God, distinguished from those Exercises of it called Good Works: Summary of all Duty.—4. Special Fruits of our New Obedience—rendered unto God.—5. Prayer.—6. Fasting: Watching.—7. Thanksgiving.—8. Vows: Lawful Oaths.—III. 1. The Heart kept: the Heart hardened.—2. Natural Aspect of these things: Gracious Aspect of them.—3. Human Nature, when under their Complete Influence.

I.—1. If we desire to have grace and peace multiplied unto us, we ought to know, assuredly, that this is possible only through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ our Lord. Nothing was ever uttered by the Saviour directly to God who sent him, with more emphasis and solemnity, than that the eternal life which he bestowed on as many as the Father had given to him, was accomplished in this, That they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.[1] It is only through the knowledge of him who has called us unto glory and virtue, that all things which pertain to life and godliness are bestowed upon us with divine power. In this manner exceeding great and precious promises are given to us: and through these promises, having escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust, we are made partakers of the divine nature.[2]

2. Well does it become us, having such a course as this set before us, to run in it patiently. Giving all diligence, we ought to add to our faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For it is only as these things are in

[1] John, xvii. 3.

[2] 2 Peter, i. 2–4.

us and abound, that we are neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nay, it is by giving diligence to make our calling and election sure, that we are kept from falling ; and that an entrance shall be administered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. On the other hand, when we lack these things we are blind, and cannot see afar off, and have forgotten that we were purged from our old sins.[1]

3. That we are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people ; is exactly to the intent that we should show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.[2] The saving grace of God has taught us nothing more distinctly, than that they who look for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ ; must not only deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world ; but must realize that the Saviour gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These are the very things which the ambassadors of Christ have in charge to speak, and exhort, and rebuke, with all authority.[3] The great thing for us to do, is to address ourselves earnestly to this vast concern of working out our salvation : and considering the awful majesty of God, to do it trembling, with his awe and his dread upon us : and considering the immensity of the work and its issues, to do it with all anxiety and pungent fear. Through it all we have this unspeakable comfort and encouragement, that it is God himself who works in us both to will and to do—both the purpose and the ability ; and that he does this of his good pleasure. Infinite mercy, in infinite complacency, is working out its fruits in us.[4]

4. It is obvious, therefore, alike from what God purposes concerning us, and what he requires of us, and what he is preparing us for ; that a New Obedience, widely different from any thing that could be rendered to him by any creature, except a penitent and believing sinner ; is the very substance of that Repentance by which we turn from sin unto God, and of that Faith by which the heart is purified and the world overcome, and is the very expression of that Sanctification through which we are perfected in

[1] 2 Pet., i. 5–11. [2] 1 Pet., ii. 9. [3] Titus, ii. 11–15. [4] Phil., ii. 12, 13.

holiness. In like manner, Good Works are the necessary result of this New Obedience—the very manifestation of it. And to complete the case, the Christian Warfare is that ceaseless conflict with all the enemies of God and of our souls, through which every follower of Christ must exhibit his New Obedience, and make his Good Works manifest. Lovest thou me? is the constant and searching question of our divine Lord. Follow me, is his perpetual command.[1]

II.—1. The Scriptures plainly teach that they who are born of the Spirit, are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.[2] To explain and to enforce this divine workmanship in the human soul, is one of the chief ends of the divine word. Renovated in Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit, after the image of God, we become new creatures: and while innumerable blessings and benefits are thus conferred upon us, new duties also arise, and a new ability to perform all duty is given to us by God. Every exercise of every Christian grace is a putting forth of this new ability—a manifestation of our New Obedience: no matter whether that exercise be purely internal, as, for example, simple Faith in the Lord Jesus, or whether it is connected with the most striking external circumstances, or lies in the performance of some great outward act. The great end of our existence is to glorify and to enjoy God: to do this, his written word is our infallible rule: and the chief things taught us therein are, what we ought to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of us. When God works in us, therefore, both to will and to do, he enables us unto all that he requires of us: for these two things taken fully, embrace all the power, all the capacity of our nature. To grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord, is to grow up unto the fruition of eternal life; for eternal life is, to know God, and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent. And this is not only required of us by God as the continual exercise of our New Obedience, but is of the very nature of the New Creature, and of its New Obedience. The root of the whole matter lies here; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness—and out of it are the issues of life. It would, therefore, be altogether appropriate in this place to take up, in succession, all the exercises of the re-

[1] John, xxi. 15, 16, 17; Matt. xvi. 24; xix. 21.

[2] Eph., ii. 10.

newed soul, and the work of the Spirit on which they are founded, in order to explain, in that way, the inward nature of our New Obedience. This, however, in all its fulness, is the work of the ministers of the Gospel: nor is it necessary to go over that aspect of the subject here, in a general manner, after devoting the whole of the preceding Book to the careful discussion of those great benefits of the Covenant of Redemption, by the application of which to us we are borne forward to the consummation of grace and the commencement of glory.

2. It is the duty which we owe to God, which is especially embraced in that aspect of our New Obedience, which is internal. But the duty which we owe to God is transcendently great, when compared with any other obligation binding on us; so much so that all other duties which bind us have their origin in this, and take their rise from truths and relations, the whole of which involve God and our duty to him. Independently of the true and the good, there is no such idea as duty in the human soul. But God is the very sum and source of all truth and all goodness. Our denial of the being and perfections of God, does not obliterate God or change his attributes; if it could, the sense of duty would cease the moment we embraced atheism. As our denial of God, of truth, and of goodness, affects only ourselves, it does not extinguish, but only pollutes and degrades our nature. It is manifest, therefore, why our offences against each other are accounted by a righteous God offences against himself; and why our charities to each other are reckoned by a gracious God as done to him. Thus David, bewailing his terrible sin in the matter of Uriah, said to God, Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.[1] And in the great day, the cruel omission of our duties to each other, will be charged and punished as offences against the blessed Saviour; while not even a cup of cold water, given to his disciples in his name, will be forgotten by him then.[2] And this is the very rule of eternal judgment: and the sentence following that rule will be, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom; depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!

3. There is, however, a very plain sense in which the exercise of our New Obedience directly to God, is distinguishable from those exercises of it which we call Good Works. There is a

[1] Psalm li. 4. [2] Matt, xxv. 31–46.

corresponding distinction in our duties, of which we say some are more particularly due to God, some to our neighbour, and some to ourself. And thus on account of the immediate connection between the New Obedience and Good Works, we say some of both are performed immediately to God, and some immediately to our neighbour. In this sense Christ contemplates and expounds the Moral Law in his Sermon on the Mount.[1] The First Table, containing the first four commandments, which sum up our duty to God,[2] the Lord Jesus reduced to the single statement, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and called it the first and great commandment.[3] The Second Table, which contains the last six commandments, summing up our duty to man,[4] Christ reduced to the single statement, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, which he called the second great commandment.[5] And he immediately added, On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. And we may add, the whole Gospel also, no part of which was written when Christ made these statements. For the Holy Ghost has reduced this sum of the Ten Commandments, which are the sum of the Moral Law, to its sum, which is declared to be—Love to God and to our neighbour.[6] It is impossible to conceive of any thing more difficult, or more complete, than these successive triumphs of divine wisdom, reducing the whole duty of man to ten propositions, and those ten to two, and those two to a single word—Love—as the fulfilling of the whole law of God![7] During thirty-three centuries, since the first of those summaries was made, no human heart has probably felt that any one of the three was in any respect imperfect; while no human intellect, before or since, has been able to reduce the vast and intractable subject to any summary at all, that any other human intellect fully approved!

4. Amongst the fruits of our New Obedience, in which the graces of the Spirit whereunto we are called enable us to abound in the way of Good Works, considered whether toward God or men; some are so conspicuous that they demand a special recognition. Such, with reference to God, are Prayer, Fasting, Thanksgiving, and Vows, and with reference to man, Alms; of

[1] Matt., v., vi., vii. [2] Deut., iv. 13; x. 1–4. [3] Matt., xxii. 37, 38.
[4] Exod., xx. [5] Matt., xxii. 38.
[6] Luke, x. 27, 28; 1 John, v. 3; 1 Tim., i. 5. [7] Rom., xiii. 10.

which all but the last will be briefly considered here—and the last afterwards, as falling more particularly under the strict idea of Good Works. It is because Christ dwells in us that our spirit lives,[1] and that we are enabled to present our bodies a living sacrifice to God, and that he accepts the sacrifice.[2] This is true in every thing that concerns our New Obedience—and every Good Work must be related to the glory of God.[3] We are not, therefore, to imagine that these fruits of our New Obedience which are specially considered, differ in their essential cause and end, from every other fruit thereof. I will put my Spirit within you, saith God, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.[4]

5. Of all the acts of the New Creature which can be considered as immediate exercises of his New Obedience, Prayer to God is the most constant: just as of all Good Works which flow from the exercise of that New Obedience—it is the most indispensable. It is well defined to be the offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, by the help of the Spirit, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.[5] It is religious worship in a sense so complete, that in its absence such worship cannot strictly be said to exist. What is true, therefore, of every part of religious worship, is most emphatically true of this chief part of it—namely, that it is to be rendered to no being except God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The foundation of all acceptable worship of God, lies in the absolute rejection of every thing as God, but the living and true God: and immediately following is the absolute rejection of all manner of worship of the true God, except in spirit and in truth.[6] As there is but one God, so there is but one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus:[7] and except by him, there is no access to God, for he is the way, the truth, and the life:[8] nor is there under heaven, among men, any name but his, whereby we must be saved.[9] As it is to God only, through Christ only, so it is by the help of the divine Spirit only, that acceptable prayer can be made to God. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: it is the Spirit which helpeth our infirmities.[10] In every thing, by prayer

[1] Rom., viii. 10. [2] Rom., xii. 1. [3] 1 Cor., x. 30. [4] Ezekiel, xxxvi. 27.
[5] John, xvi. 23, 24; Rom., viii. 26; Ps. xxxii. 5, 6; Phil., iv. 6.
[6] Ex., xx.; John, iv. 24. [7] 1 Tim., ii. 5. [8] John, xiv. 6.
[9] Acts, iv. 12. [10] Rom., viii. 26.

and supplication, with thanksgiving, our requests ought to be made known unto God.[1] God is the hearer and the answerer of prayer:[2] and it is not only the duty, but the high privilege of all men, everywhere, to offer up true worship to the Father, who seeketh such worship of men.[3] For he accepts the confessions of broken and contrite hearts: and he receives the thanksgivings of grateful hearts for mercies bestowed: and answers the petitions of longing hearts, for needed things. But Confession—Thanksgiving—and Petition—with Praise, are the chief acts of prayer. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.[4] Even such as have neither part nor lot in the Son of God, and whose heart is not right in the sight of God, and who are in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity; are explicitly directed to repent of their wickedness, and pray God if perhaps they may be forgiven.[5] In the space of two successive verses, the blessed Lord reiterated six times, that God will be found of them that seek him; and that he will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him.[6] If it were possible to add any thing to the force of such statements by the Redeemer; that would be found in the fact that they were made while he was expressly teaching the nature and efficacy of prayer; in the same discourse in which he delivered that model and summary of prayer for all men, and for all time, which bears to the life of the human soul, the same relation which his summary of the law of God bears to the morality of human actions. If our life before God was regulated by perfect love to him and to our neighbour: and our life with God was responsive to the Lord's Prayer: what higher blessedness could a pure heart conceive of on earth—what greater fitness for heaven?

6. Connected immediately with Prayer, and having direct reference to immediate duty and to ourselves, is Fasting; and with this, Watching may be associated as standing in a similar relation to prayer, and as nearly related to Fasting. While of itself mere fasting has no value, and may be associated with habitual hypocrisy, as it was by the Pharisees—and with fatal heresy and abounding wickedness, as it is in the Papal superstition: nevertheless, religious abstinence from food and drink, and other usual or necessary comforts, wholly for a short time, or partially

[1] Phil., iv. 6. [2] Ps. lxv. 2; Heb., iv. 14–16. [3] John, iv. 23.
[4] James, v. 16 [5] Acts, viii. 21–23. [6] Matt., vii. 7, 8; Luke, xi. 13

for a longer time, is clearly warranted, if not indeed commanded, both in the Old Testament and the New.[1] Its use is to aid us in the duty of repentance and in cultivating an humble and prayerful spirit; afflicting our souls in the due consideration of our sins, or of chastisement inflicted on us on account of them; and crying unto God, with faith in his promises to such as are penitent, for deliverance from judgments hanging over us, or already come upon us, or for the obtaining of special benefits, mercies, or favours. The Lord Jesus, who allowed his disciples to lack nothing while he was with them; plainly notified them that when he was taken from them the time to fast would come.[2] It is, therefore—as the conduct of Christ and the whole treatment of the subject throughout the Scriptures show—a permanent obligation of that kind whose performance is occasional. And being in its nature wholly religious, it belongs to the church of God only, by its divine authority to order its observance when occasion demands; and to each individual to practise it in addition, according to his own spiritual necessities; and to the civil power, as itself an ordinance of God, to recommend it on occasions of public and general necessity. The Lord Jesus preceded his public ministry with a miraculous fast of forty days and forty nights' continuance: which was immediately followed by the temptation of the Devil, and the subsequent ministry of the angels unto him.[3] It is striking to observe how many of the most remarkable incidents recorded in the Scriptures were connected with solemn religious fasting. Such was the case in the great deliverance of Israel by the hands of Samuel,[4] as well as that through the instrumentality of Esther,[5] and the leading back of the captivity by Nehemiah,[6] and the call of the Gentiles into the Gospel Church in the person of Cornelius.[7] I have already stated that religious Watching, is closely connected in the Scriptures both with Special Prayer, and with Religious Fasting. It is the voluntary and religious abstinence from sleep, in order to the higher advancement of our spiritual meditations, and the more perfect and earnest use of special prayer. The Passover was celebrated at night; a feast with bitter herbs, without leven, and after pro-

[1] Joel, i. 13, 14; ii. 12–14; Levit., xxiii. 27; Matt., vi. 16–18; Acts, xiv. 23; xiii. 3; 1 Cor., vii. 5.
[2] Matt., ix. 14, 15; Luke, v. 35; Matt., vi. 16–18.
[3] Matt., iv. 1–11.
[4] 1 Sam., vii. 6.
[5] Esther, iv. 16.
[6] Nehem., i. 4.
[7] Acts, x. 10–30.

tracted fastings:[1] and the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ was instituted at night, and eaten as the Lord's Supper—which name it still bears.[2] And during the same night, after the Lord had gone out with his Apostles to the Garden of Gethsemane where he endured his supernatural agony: he desired them—especially Peter and the two sons of Zebedee—to watch with him; and during his conflict with the powers of darkness he came three times to them.[3] Nothing is more affecting than his two brief chidings of them: What, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. And at last: Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.[4] Having, therefore, the request, the command, and the practice of our divine Master:[5] his people have full warrant for the special use of religious abstinence from sleep, as well as religious humiliation in the whole matter expressed by the word Fasting. Have they not, also, abundant evidence around them, and in them, of what they may expect when they live far below their privileges, and in the habitual neglect of any of the divinely authorized means, whether of nourishing, or of manifesting, their New Obedience?

7. In speaking of Prayer, I have said that Confession, Supplication, and Thanksgiving, with Praise, were its chief parts; and in speaking of Fasting with Watching, I have pointed out how Confession and Supplication were intimately related to them. Thanksgiving remains to be briefly considered, in connection with the special Praise of God; and both of them, in their double aspect, as being manifestations of our New Obedience, and that specially in relation to the worship of God, and to Prayer as the most constant act thereof. In general, it is our duty to bless and praise the Lord for all he is, and for all he does: to magnify his great name, and thankfully acknowledge his being, his dominion, his grace, his love, his mercy, nay, even his fatherly chastisements. And so we are expressly commanded, In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.[6] It was the habit of Christ to render thanks publicly and emphatically to the Lord of heaven and

[1] Exod., xii. *passim*. [2] Matt., xxvi. 17–35. [3] Matt., xxvi. 36–46.
[4] Matt., xxvi. 40, 41, 45. [5] Matt., xiv. 23, 25; Mark, vi. 46–48.
[6] 1 Thess., v. 18.

earth ; and to state to the Father the things for which he thus rejoiced in him.[1] And many examples are recorded for our instruction, touching the special thanksgiving of the saints of God, whether for the abundance and faithfulness of his grace and mercy commonly bestowed on them, or for special tokens of his favour and love vouchsafed unto them. Thus David blessed and worshipped God before all the congregation, for having stirred up the hearts of the people to a wonderful eagerness and liberality towards building the house of the Lord.[2] Amongst all the inspired writings, there is scarce any thing more glorious than the song which Moses and the children of Israel sang unto the Lord, upon the deliverance of the people of God, and the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea.[3] They who get the victory over the Beast will sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb, even a song of praise to the Lord God Almighty—the King of Saints—for his great and marvellous works, and for his just and true ways.[4] In effect, our confessions spring from a sense of God's grace to the guilty—our petitions from a sense of his mercy to the miserable—and our thankfulness from a sense of his abounding goodness and faithfulness to us, notwithstanding our sin and misery. Thank-offerings belonged to the Jewish dispensation as really as sin-offerings—and the cultivation and expression of a sense of love and gratitude to God for his special mercies, is amongst the most distinct manifestations of our New Obedience. And so, besides the perpetual cultivation of a thankful and loving spirit, and the perpetual exhibition of our thankfulness to God in all our ways, and especially in all his stated worship : we are obliged, on special occasions, to be designated by the Church of God, or recommended by the civil magistrate, when the duty is general—and to be undertaken by ourselves when it is private—to set apart particular seasons for special Thanksgiving to God, as the author and giver of all good. Thanksgiving is the complement of Fasting. The two united cover the immense department of true Religion, appertaining to that portion of our New Obedience to which they relate.

8. It remains to explain briefly the relation of Vows to our New Obedience. They are properly defined to be religious promises made to God, that, for the promotion of his glory and

[1] Luke, x. 21; Matt., x. 25.
[2] 1 Chron., xxix. 1–19.
[3] Exod., xv. 1–19.
[4] Rev., xv. 2, 3.

our salvation, we will do, or forbear to do, that which being neither evil, nor impossible, nor rash, may be acceptable to him. Being a direct and voluntary act of the New Creature in the way of the worship of God, it is manifest that any trifling with him, much less any thing insulting to him in such a matter, is only proof of extreme folly and wickedness. There is a very signal example of a rash vow, and of its terrible consequences, in the case of Jephtha, recorded for everlasting instruction.[1] And one not less striking, of the effects of sinful remissness in performing a lawful one. For Jacob had made a solemn vow at Bethel, as he fled from his brother Esau into Padan Aram: and years afterwards, when God had brought him back full of blessings, he forgot his vow: but God did not. In the midst of his sorrows, he heard the voice of God, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and he understood at once.[2] In saying that religious vows are voluntary, I mean that they are not of stated obligation on any one; but that it lies in the heart of *each* particular child of God to determine for himself in what circumstances, and by what particular means, he will thus magnify the Lord. They seem, undoubtedly, to be of permanent use to men, and to have a permanent divine authority. David couples them immediately with Thanksgiving and Prayer: Offer unto God thanksgiving: and pay thy vows unto the Most High: and call upon me in the day of trouble: and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.[3] In the New Testament, two instances are recorded of the existence of Vows—once in immediate connection with the Apostle Paul,[4] and once involving with him, the Apostle James and all the elders at Jerusalem, in the recognition thereof as usual and proper.[5] It is remarkable, however, that by the concession of Paul in this latter case he ultimately lost his life: a concession not approved of God, apparently, not because of the nature of Religious Vows, but because under the peculiar circumstances, it was a concession designed to put undue honour, both upon a false prejudice, and upon the legal dispensation.[6] We are not to imagine that our Vows, or their performance, have any such merit that they can be the proper ground of any mercy of God to us. Their use is to confirm and strengthen our own faith under heavy

[1] Judges, xi. *passim.*
[2] Gen., xxviii. 19–22; xxxiv. *passim;* xxxv. 1–15.
[3] Psalm l. 14, 15.
[4] Acts, xviii. 18.
[5] Acts, xxi. 19–26.
[6] Acts, xxi. 11–40.

trials ; and to manifest our thankfulness under special mercies. They have, therefore, a very close relation to Fasting and adversity on one side, and to Thanksgiving and prosperity on the other —and to special Prayer always : and thus, everyhow, to glorify God and promote our salvation. I ought to add a few words concerning Lawful Oaths, which so far have the nature of Vows that they are to be made only to the Living God, and are a direct appeal to him to note our sincerity and to judge us accordingly. I have sworn, says the Psalmist, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments :[1] connecting the Oaths and the Vows with each other. An Oath, therefore, in its nature, appertains to the worship of God.[2] The violation of it is contrary alike to the Moral Law and to all idea of holiness ; and is not only most sinful and degrading in us, but most insulting to the majesty of God.[3] In like manner, all trifling and irreverent and profane use of oaths, is expressly forbidden by God, and is wholly inconsistent with that state of heart out of which our New Obedience springs.[4] Truth, which is justice in our words : justice, which is truth in our conduct : this is the fundamental conception of natural rectitude. Evangelical holiness—true holiness—is the product of divine truth and divine righteousness. Fidelity to Oaths, therefore, is one of the clearest forms of duty, resulting both from nature and from grace : fundamentally obligatory by our relation to God, both as our Creator and as our Saviour.

III.—1. Keep thy heart, says Solomon, with all diligence ; for out of it are the issues of life.[5] And the corresponding caution of David, so urgently pressed on us by Paul, is not less express : To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart.[6] So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest : so we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief : there remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God.[7] These are three forms in which Paul deduces from the warning of David, considered in three different lights, the great conclusions to which that warning points. There are issues of life from the heart of man, and there is a way whereby they may be secured ; there is, also, a way to harden the heart of man, and be deaf to the voice of God himself. If we may trust our souls to the guidance of in-

[1] Psalm cxix. 106. [2] Deut., x. 20. [3] Exod., xx. 7.
[4] James, v. 12. [5] Prov., iv. 23.
[6] Psalm xcv. 7, 8; Heb., iii. 7, 15; iv. 7. [7] Heb., iii. 11, 19; iv. 9.

finite wisdom and goodness, the things which are herein laid open to us are the very things which, if we give diligent heed, we will find causing the waters of eternal life to flow into our hearts, and from them to flow over upon our whole way of life: the very things which, if we neglect, we will find our hearts become hard and barren, like Gilboa, where the beauty of Israel was slain—where the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away—where no dew fell, neither was any rain there!

2. It is these things which, of themselves or in their indissoluble connection with spiritual religion, are so offensive to the carnal heart. The end they look to—unlimited obedience to God, and that of a kind new and strange to our depraved nature—is thoroughly repugnant to us: and all the means proposed—means involving humiliating supplications and confessions, painful self-denials and inward conflicts—are all inconsistent with our natural impulses. More than that, the light in which God represents himself to us in the whole matter of salvation responsive to our New Obedience, is one in which we naturally see no beauty that we should desire him. And so far is the carnal mind from being subject to the law of God, that it neither is, nor can be; and that law is foolishness unto it. When we turn to the penitent and believing follower of Christ, all this is changed, utterly changed! This spiritual insight into God, this humble seeking unto God, this abhorring of all that separates him from God, this joyful obedience unto God, this strange manner of the service and fruition of God, this peculiar way of growing into higher conformity to God as he grows into surer knowledge of him, and love of his service: all—all is accepted by him—not only as true and right altogether, but as pregnant with a superhuman excellence and efficacy. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.[1]

3. All that is capable of being purified, and exalted, and ennobled in man, springs up and is perfected under the influence of this immediate intercourse with our Creator and Redeemer. The highest conceptions of which the spirit of man is capable, are those which he habitually cherishes. The noblest thoughts dwell habitually in his understanding: those emotions which are at once the most just, the most tender, and the most enduring, oc-

[1] 2 Cor., v. 17.

cupy his heart: and the motives which actuate his conduct, and the ends which he proposes to himself, are the purest and the highest which his nature can entertain. He walks with God; and his whole being receives the influence of that infinite presence. The Saviour of the world is his brother and his familiar friend; and men take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus. I do not say that all manifest alike, the divine effects of this true conformity to God. All who profess the name of Christ do not walk diligently—if at all—in the ways of this New Obedience. I do not say that any come fully up to the perfect stature of men, in Christ Jesus. But I do say, that the nearer we live to God the more are we like God; and that the more perfect our obedience is to Jesus Christ, the more complete is the exhibition in us of the very highest form of human excellence, and the possession by us of the very purest form of human blessedness. No folly of mankind was ever greater, than their light esteem of that type of human perfection, which reflects the image of the Son of God. No shame of the followers of the Son of God was ever more cruel, than that their conduct should justify this reproach of men, to them and to their divine Master!

CHAPTER XVI.

GOOD WORKS.

I. 1. Good Works Defined and Classified.—2. Considered with Reference to our Natural Man.—3. The Universal Brotherhood of Man: the Universal Fellowship of the Saints.—4. Love—Charity.—5. The greatest of all Christian Graces.—6. Relation of all Christian Offices thereto.—7. Almsgiving.—II. 1. Manifold Probation of Man: Relation of Good Works thereto.—2. Their influence upon the Happiness and Holiness of him who performs them.—3. Considered as a Means of Usefulness.—4. Considered with Reference to the General Judgment.—5. Our Works, the Measure of final Reward and Punishment.—6. The idea of Reward, wholly appurtenant to Grace.—7. Other grounds for the necessity of Good Works: to adorn the Doctrine—and glorify the Name of God.—III. 1. The Will of God the sole Rule of all Good Works: Consequences of this Great Truth.—2. Great Topics associated with this, and determined by it:—(*a*) Christian Liberty, and Liberty of Conscience:—(*b*) Implicit Faith: Tender Consciences:—(*c*) Power of the Civil Magistrate, in things sacred:—(*d*) Spiritual authority of Synods and Councils.—3. Cause, absolute and instrumental:—End, chief and subordinate:—Intimate Nature of Good Works;—(*a*) Motive:—(*b*) Rule:—(*c*) Grace:—(*d*) End—Means—Manner:—(*e*) A Heart right in the sight of God.

I.—1. Good Works, as I have shown in the previous chapter, flow immediately from our New Obedience, and are always manifestations of it. Those manifestations of that New Obedience which have an immediate relation to God, and which immediately concern the maintenance of its power in our own hearts; have been considered in that chapter. Those manifestations of our New Obedience which more immediately relate to our neighbour, and whose exercise presumes that its power is maintained in our hearts; are more especially called Good Works, and will be discussed now. Considered with reference to the Moral Law, they fall particularly under the Second Table, containing the last six commandments. In this sense Good Works are all those duties which we owe to all men, according to their necessities, and to our obligations as followers of Jesus Christ. These may be summarily included under two general heads: *First*, such as are due to the souls of men, because their performance by us may promote the comfort, edification, and

salvation thereof: *Secondly*, such as are due to the bodies of men, because their performance by us may promote their comfort, competence and health.

2. Nor ought it to be thought that these statements are, on the one side, too strict in defining all Good Works to be fruits of our New Obedience; or too broad, on the other side, in binding us without reserve, to every Good Work. For it is by purging ourselves and becoming vessels unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, that we are prepared unto every Good Work;[1] and because we are the workmanship of God created in Christ Jesus, that we have inclination and ability unto Good Works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.[2] As to our natural ability to perform Good Works, taking the ordinary sense of the Scriptures, that we are by nature the children of wrath,[3] and that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God;[4] assuredly, we are so far from having any such ability, that our carnal mind is enmity to God, not subject to his law, nor capable of being so.[5] If by natural ability we mean the created faculties of the soul and the body, and the defaced image of God still in us, whereby, in the absence of the knowledge of God, we are a law unto ourselves;[6] then, assuredly, this is the nature, which, by being renewed by the Holy Ghost, becomes competent, being moved by the grace of God to all Good Works.[7] Whatever may be the excellence of virtue considered in itself, and considered as the opposite of vice; it is a mere delusion—wholly subversive of Christianity—to represent any act, or exercise, or habit of the unregenerate soul as positively good in the sight of God. Nay, more, the Good Works even of the regenerate soul, performed under the promptings of divine grace, and regulated by the divine word, are so far from meriting any thing for us, when considered merely of themselves, that it is in Christ alone they can be accepted of God, as well as performed by us.[8]

3. Amongst the duties which we owe to men, there is one so emphatically urged throughout the Scriptures, and so distinctly made prominent in the teachings of Christ, as to deserve a special notice in every discussion of the general subject of Good

[1] 2 Tim., ii. 21. [2] Eph., ii. 10. [3] Eph., ii. 3.
[4] 1 Cor., ii. 14. [5] Rom., viii. 7. [2] Rom., ii. 14, 15; John, xv. 5, 6.
[7] Matt.. xvi. 17; 1 Thess., v. 23. [8] Isa., lxiv., 6; Eph., i. 6.

Works. Indeed in its widest sense it embraces, in some sort, under the name of *Charity* the very sum and essence of our New Obedience, as manifested towards each other: while in its narrowest sense, as *Alms*, it is a recognition at once of the common brotherhood of mankind, the common salvation through Christ, and the common Fatherhood of God: and in all its manifestations, it is the expression of that communion with each other in Love, which results from our mutual communion with Christ through Faith. Behold, said the angel of the Lord to the shepherds of Bethlehem, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And then a multitude of the heavenly host burst forth in praise: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.[1] And this is the sum of the mission of the Saviour of the world—supreme glory to God—boundless peace between God and men and between man and man—supreme complacency from God to men and from man to his brother man. The sublime principle which underlies the performance of our duties to each other, as a remedy against the sin and suffering and sorrow of this life; is the divine restoration in Christ and the powerful working through the Spirit, of the brotherhood of man. A glorious truth—defaced in man's soul by the fall—unspeakably weakened and perverted by the degradation into which actual sins sink the soul—never utterly lost as an original element of our being, and completely restored as a living power, in the life and doctrine of Christ, and made effectual in us by the work of the divine Spirit.

4. The same word* which is used to express the love of God for us, and our love for him, is used to express both the state of our soul and our outward act, both in our endeavours to glorify God, and in our endeavours to do good, both to the souls and the bodies of our fellow-men. Our English words *love* and *charity*, are both used to translate the one Greek word. It is this wide meaning of the Greek term, and the very near resemblance between the meaning of the two English words in their evangelical use; which throws some occasional obscurity over them, with regard to matters so distinct as God's feeling toward us, our feelings toward him, and our feelings toward our fellow-creatures. Love to us, by God, is the very foundation of his eternal purpose

[1] Luke, ii. 8–14.

* Αγαπη.

to save us, for the glory of his own great name: and that same love to us, is the moving principle throughout the whole process of our salvation: and its fruition by us is the measure in which grace is accomplished in us, and glory is bestowed upon us. Our love to God—taking our whole being together—is the one decisive mark—the one unmistakable distinction between his servants and his enemies. It is this deep, practical fact—them who love God—upon which the whole theory and practice of salvation is divinely explained to men. For it is for them that all things work together for good—it is they who are eternally known of God—they who were eternally predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God—they who are in time called of God and justified—they who are glorified for evermore: and they are they whom nothing shall ever be able to separate from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.[1] In like manner, the love of man, naturally, for his fellow-men; parent, child, husband, wife, friend, brother, kinsman, neighbour, countryman, fellow-creature; this is the very testimony of our nature to our unity as a race—and to our common Father, Benefactor, Creator. And Christian love in the renewed soul, is precisely that wherein they who are united to Jesus Christ by Faith, and so have communion with him; have also communion with all others thus united to him. Our English word *charity* expresses a peculiar type of Christian grace; that, namely, in the exercise of which our love for God and man, prompts us to promote the glory of God, by promoting the good, both temporal and spiritual, of our fellow-creatures.

5. It is not surprising, therefore, that our divine Master, in his office of Teacher of men, and his inspired Apostles following him, should have explained and enforced this greatest of all graces, with so much fulness. In his Sermon on the Mount, which embraced every thing, every leading aspect of this grace is presented.[2] The same great Apostle who has written a treatise on Faith, already considered, has also written one on Charity.[3] Having taught us immediately before it,[4] the excellence of all the special gifts of the Spirit, and yet that all the graces of the Spirit are more excellent even than miraculous gifts: and teaching us immediately after it, that the grace whereby we may be of benefit

[1] Rom., viii. 28–39.
[2] Matt., v. 21–26, 27–32, 38–42, 43–48; vi. 1–4.
[3] 1 Cor., xii. *passim*.
[4] 1 Cor., xiii.

to others in the knowledge of the Lord, is that which charity leads us to desire most of all :[1] between these two conceptions he enforces, in detail, the nature and the preëminence of this crowning grace. The conclusion he reaches is thus stated : And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three : but the greatest of these is charity.[2] Greater than faith, by which the just live, and without which it is impossible to please God : greater than hope —by which we are saved : greatest of all is charity—charity that never faileth ! The life of God in the soul of man, nourished by that faith which is the evidence of things not seen—the substance of things hoped for—rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God—is habitually manifested in, this life, by that love of God which prompts us to seek his glory and the good of our fellow-men. Still more exclusively in the life to come, is this abounding love the very substance of our eternal life. For the time will come when all that is now realized to us only through faith, will be immediately realized in the presence of God ; and when every pure and earnest hope will be fulfilled in the endless fruition of God. But to all eternity—our love for God and for each other—and our rejoicing, through this love, in the glory of God and the blessedness of each other—can know no change, unless to be eternally increased.

6. It is this exalted and imperishable Christian love, which in a peculiar form of it receives the name of charity—that receives in a lower form of it the name of *Almsgiving*. Between these two forms of it, or blending with one or other of these, there is nothing in the way of personal offort, or sacrifice, for the glory of God or the good of our fellow-beings, that could be called a Good Work, that does not find its place. The exposition and enforcement of this immense and blessed department of the Christian Offices, belong especially to the ministry of the word : to teach all nations to observe whatever Jesus has commanded—being the very duty he has laid upon them.[3] The practice of these Christian Offices, in all simplicity, all strictness, all fulness, is, so far as this life is concerned, the very thing for which we are fitted by that workmanship of God, wherein we are created in Christ Jesus unto Good Works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.[4] And the blessed hope which we cherish of the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,

[1] 1 Cor., xiv. [2] 1 Cor., xiii. 13. [3] Matt., xxviii. 20. [4] Eph, ii. 10.

can never be separated from the conviction that he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of Good Works.[1] It will not do for us to say—Thou hast faith, and I have works ; the Gospel of God admits of no such dislocation ; for, on the one hand, faith without works is dead ; and on the other, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified.[2] That which especially wearies God with the wickedness of those who profess to obey him, is that they should call such as do evil, good in the sight of the Lord—and say that he delighteth in them.[3] That which peculiarly provokes him with all false teachers, he expresses by saying, Because ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad, and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life.[4] Many, said the blessed Saviour, will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works ? And then will I profess unto them—I never knew you : depart from me, ye that work iniquity.[5]

7. I have already said that every leading aspect of this great grace was presented in the wonderful Sermon on the Mount. Blessed are the merciful, said Christ ; for they shall obtain mercy : and teaching us how to perform the duty, every where commanded in the Scriptures, he bids us perform our alms in secret ; and our Father which seeth in secret shall reward us openly.[6] The very word we translate *Alms*, means mercy :* and the act intended—that act of Christian love wherein they who have this world's goods bestow thereof on those who are in want —is constantly recognized as a Good Work. It is both a duty and a grace. God loveth a cheerful giver : and his children with a free purpose of heart—not grudgingly, or of necessity, but abounding in every Good Work, perform this act of their New Obedience through the grace of God.[7] Considered as a duty, none is more strictly commanded. From of old God has said, The poor shall never cease out of the land : therefore I command thee, saying, thou shalt open thy hand wide to thy brother, to

[1] Titus, ii. 13, 14. [2] Rom., iii. 20 ; James, ii. 17, 18. [3] Mal., ii. 17.
[4] Ezek., xiii. 22. [5] Matt., vii. 22, 23. [6] Matt., v. 7 ; vi. 1–4.
* Ελεημοσυνη—misericordia. [7] 2 Cor., ix. 6–15.

thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.[1] To do good and to communicate are sacrifices, under the Gospel Dispensation, and with such God is well pleased.[2] At our highest estate we are but stewards of the manifold grace of God; and as good stewards we ought to minister one to another, according as every man has received from God. Above all things, therefore, we are exhorted to have fervent charity among ourselves: for charity shall cover a multitude of sins. And in stewards the first thing required is, that a man be found faithful.[3] Nay, of him who dispenseth to the poor, it is written, that his righteousness endureth for ever, and that his horn shall be exalted with honour.[4] And so strongly does Christ enforce almsgiving as a Christian duty, that in his caution to us to take heed that we do not our alms* before men to be seen of them, and thereby lose our reward with our Father which is in Heaven;[5] the word he uses means righteousness: and then follows his special direction touching alms,† as one department of the righteousness required of us. The Mosaic institutions provided for nothing more carefully, than to alleviate all the ills of poverty: and in the Gospel Church, a class of perpetual office bearers was ordained of God—whose functions relate directly to the temporal sorrows, afflictions, and necessities of men.[6] The great declaration of the Lord, descriptive of his kingdom—The poor have the Gospel preached to them—is not more precise than his great command to all his followers, Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.[7]

II.—1. Considering the mixed and confused state of things which this life exhibits to us, we are able to reduce its fearful chaos of events, and actions, and motives, and vicissitudes, to any comprehensible order; only when the light of the past history of our race, and the light from a future world, are thrown upon a scene of things otherwise so full of contradictions and enigmas. If we accept the evil as the result upon a glorious existence, of the shock which it incurred in the loss of the image and favour of God by the Fall; and the good, as the result of that divine grace which has brought to light salvation through a Re-

[1] Deut., xx. 11. [2] Heb., xiii. 16. [3] 1 Pet., iv. 8–10; 1 Cor., iv. 2.
[4] Ps. cxii. 9. * Δίκαοσυνη—æquitas—justitia—pietas.
[5] Matt., vi. 1. † Ελεημοσυνη—misericordia. [6] Deut., xv. *passim*; Acts, vi. 1–7.
[7] Matt., v. 42; xi. 5.

deemer: then the key of the frightful paradox is placed in our hands, and a principle of order passes with irresistible force through the whole life of the world, and through the boundless and confused mass of human actions. What we behold is a preparation for a future state of existence—a probation, ceaseless and manifold—with reference to an endless state of being, widely different from this. Who are on the Lord's side? And who are on the side of Satan? Of the former, what mansion will they inhabit in that world of light—what crown will they wear there? Of the latter, how near will they approach the gate of Heaven before they turn downward to the pit? How much wrath will they heap up for themselves against the day of wrath? Concerning all, how long and how far will the grace of God endure towards each one of them? To what height of perfection will he carry some before he takes them to himself? After what fatal grieving of his Spirit, will he leave others to make their bed in hell? A manifold probation—a perpetual preparation—not only of the whole race, but of each individual of it: from the distant past and from the distant future, a light divinely shed upon the mighty struggle which makes its nature clear: the result, as to our personal knowledge of it, adjourned to the judgment of the great day. This is what we behold: of this we are, each one, a part. Into this chaos thus expounded to us of God, his infinite grace, which has done so much besides, casts this divine element of Good Works, such as I have tried to describe it. The nature, the use, the efficacy, the result of such a remedy, in such a world: all this is peculiar to Messiah. It is his conception, his work: his glory is staked upon the result: and having sealed his purpose, and his conviction with his blood, he will not shrink from the perfect execution of his plan.

2. Do men desire to be happy? Do they desire to be holy? Weary and heavy laden with the burden of sin, do they sigh for rest, and yearn for deliverance from the bondage under which they groan? There is one way—and there never was any other—whereby we may get peace unto our souls. God has said there is no peace to the wicked. Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly before God. Fear God, and keep his commandments. This is the whole duty of man: and therein is his whole blessedness. It is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanseth from all sin: it is his Spirit that leadeth into all truth: it is his precepts, in the keep-

ing of which there is great reward, even a hundredfold in this life of all we have forsaken to follow him, and in the world to come eternal life. The evil propensities of our natures languish and die, as we walk by the side of the Son of Man: and all pure desires, and all right emotions, and all good thoughts, spring up in the soul in which his image dwells. If we will obey his commandments, we shall know his doctrine, whether it be of God. If men did but understand that it is more blessed to give than to receive: that to confer happiness is itself the noblest form of happiness: that to be good, we must do good! It is Jesus who has conceived the sublime idea, that instruction and persuasion, in opposition to violence and force, are the real foundations of universal dominion. It is he alone who has taught us, that goodness, and love, and mercy, cherished in our hearts, and manifested towards our sinning and perishing fellow-creatures, are the true sources of what felicity is attainable on earth. 'Vengeance is mine, saith God; I will repay. For us, not vengeance, but Good Works, is what he requires us to pursue, if we would glorify him, or have peace in our own soul.

3. Would men be useful, as well as happy? Indeed, can we conceive of happiness on any other condition? Then let us rather say, are men willing to be happy on condition of being useful to their fellow-creatures, and therein accepted of God, the fountain of all blessedness? Then let them look abroad upon a world lying in sin—upon a countless race of one blood with themselves, sunk in misery: and then let them consider what the Saviour of this ruined world and this suffering race means by Good Works, and by all his loving appeals to us to practise them. He means edification to every living soul: he means comfort alike to the soul and body of every one whose nature the Son of Man has taken, every one whose nature we ourselves share. Our own household first: then our kindred, friends, neighbours: then our countrymen: then all the world. Above the rest, but not to the exclusion of them, the household of faith. To save them from hell, to lead them in the way of eternal life, to alleviate the evils of their present estate, and to promote their edification and comfort with reference to this life as well as to the next: such is the conception our Lord has of what our duty both to him and to each other requires; of what our own hearts will prompt us to do, in proportion as his Spirit dwells in us. The whole is the fruit

of our New Obedience: the whole is expressed when we say, Good Works. There is a wisdom which descendeth not from above: but the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.[1]

4. That which so intimately concerns our happiness, our holiness, and our usefulness in this life—which so conclusively determines the reality and the extent of our consecration to Christ; will, in the life to come, and in the eternal judgment which stands between this life and that, reappear in all its overpowering force. In this mixed, probationary, preparatory state of things, the righteous and the wicked dwell and struggle together: and God's sun shines upon the good and the evil, and he sendeth his rain upon the just and the unjust, and he openeth his hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing. Nevertheless, it is appointed unto men once to die, and afterwards to be judged: and that God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.[2] Behold, I come quickly, is the solemn warning; and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be.[3] And I saw the dead, says the Apostle John, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened: and another book was opened which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.[4] Then has fully come the time for the unjust to be shown to be unjust, and the filthy to be filthy; and for the righteous to be shown to be righteous, and the holy to be holy: and for each one to receive a just recompense of reward.[5] The wheat and the tares shall no longer grow together: the end of the world will have come, and the Son of Man shall send forth his angels to reap the harvest of this world, and the good seed are the children of the Kingdom: the tares are the children of the wicked one, and the enemy who sowed them the Devil: they shall be cast into a furnace of fire, and there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth: then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.[6]

[1] James, iii. 15–17.
[2] Acts, xvii. 31.
[3] Rev., xxii. 12.
[4] Rev., xx. 12.
[5] Rev., xxii. 10, 11.
[6] Matt., xiii. 36–43.

This is the exposition made by Christ of one of the most remarkable of his parables.

5. The Scriptures do not teach that the question whether we are brethren of Christ or children of the Devil, will be decided by the nature of our works in the day of judgment; in any other sense than as making judicially manifest that which had been accepted of God on widely different grounds, and acted on by him, as already determined, in every preceding part of our existence. Nor, indeed, is the general judgment itself in order to determine who are the followers of Christ, and who are the children of the Devil: for that is already determined before the judgment is set, in the very nature of the resurrection which precedes it, as well as in every act of God towards man since the Fall. But in the great day, and in the general judgment of all men, according to their works; the special relation of our works to our eternal destiny, is the settlement of the exact reward to each child of God, and his exact position in the glorified kingdom, and the settlement of the precise condemnation, and the grounds thereof, of each child of the Devil: and on both sides, and in every individual case, the illustration to the universe of the infinite perfections and glory of God. Therefore, say the Scriptures, other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ.[1] Christ—not our own works—is the sole cause of our salvation. But touching our works and our reward, the Apostle immediately adds, Now if any man build on this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble: every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.[2] Christ has taught us in one of his parables, the utter exclusion of all who rest on any other foundation: and in another he has explained to us how perfectly our own mistakes concerning ourselves will be rectified when he passes judgment on our Good Works. To one the King said, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? Bind him hand and foot and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.[3] To another, when

[1] 1 Cor., iii. 11. [2] 1 Cor., iii. 12–15. [3] Matt., xxii. 11–13.

a man more honourable than he had come, he said, Give this man place. And to a third he said, Friend, go up higher.[1] The Saviour's conclusion of both of these parables is remarkable. To the former, he adds, For many are called, but few chosen: and to the latter, For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.[2] It is, therefore, the doctrine of Christ, that the reward of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked, will be according to their works. He that gained ten talents, will be rewarded above him that gained five; while he that gained nothing, but hid his Lord's money in the earth, will see the one talent committed to him, taken from him and given to him who had ten, while the slothful and disobedient servant will be cast into outer darkness. For, adds Christ, Unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath.[3]

6. The moment we couple the idea of reward with the idea of Good Works, which the Scriptures do continually; we pass at once out of the domain of law, into that of grace. Law knows nothing about reward to those who keep it. It gives protection, it offers redress, it approves, it punishes. He who has gained ten talents is protected in their possession and enjoyment, or is made to account to him whose steward he was. But the law says nothing about making him ruler over ten cities. That is favour—reward—grace. That is the act—not of the law—but of the Lawgiver: nor is it his act as lawgiver, but as sovereign and bountiful ruler—patron—friend. But this case, obvious and naked as it is, is far stronger than any we can ever present: since the conduct of him who gained the ten talents was blameless, as under the law—whereas all our Good Works are of themselves imperfect, and become doubly imperfect as soon as their character is determined by our nature as sinners. When we say, therefore, that our Good Works will be the measure of the reward graciously bestowed on us by God—we must go farther even than we have already gone, when it was shown that they must be built upon Christ as the only foundation that is, or can be laid. Our persons and our works must not only be accepted in him—and our ability to perform such as will be accepted, derived from him; but our particular imperfection in every work we attempt,

[1] Luke, xiv. 8–10. [2] Matt., xxi. 14; Luke, xiv. 11. [3] Matt., xxv. 29.

and the particular imperfection of every work of itself, when we and it are judged by an infinitely holy God, according to an infinitely holy law ; make it impossible for us or our works to be approved, much less rewarded, except as Christ covers them and us with his infinite righteousness. As under grace, our Good Works are the measure of our reward : and so they find a place under the Covenant of Redemption—and so our imperfect obedience is accepted as if it were perfect, on account of the perfect obedience of the Saviour with whom we are united, and who presents us and our works faultless before God. And in this sense it is written, God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed towards his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister.[1] And so the sublime exhortation of him that hath the key of David is, Behold I come quickly, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.[2]

7. Seeing the relation of our Good Works to our own comfort and usefulness in this life, and to our eternal state in the life to come ; we see therein abundant reason for the prominence given to them by the word of God. But there are other aspects of the subject, to which I can only allude, which present other grounds, not less decisive, concerning the nature and necessity of these fruits of our New Obedience. I will suggest but two : namely, that it is by them alone we can adorn the doctrine we profess—and it is through them alone we can glorify God upon earth, with our bodies and our spirits which are his. The end of our faith is, indeed, the salvation of our own soul : and the good of others, whose salvation and comfort we have the means of promoting, is the obvious matter to which our efforts should be directed. But this is not the whole of our vocation—the sum of our mission as children of the King Eternal. God permits us—desires us—fits us, to love him. Our love is the return he asks for all he has done for us. To be very jealous for the glory of his great name, well becomes those whom he has made heirs of the glory of the work of creation, of providence, and of grace ; to whom, having given all else, he gives himself, to be enjoyed by them for ever. The Saviour Christ—has given himself for us. Above all that he does for us—there is himself—the God-man : the perfection of all the glory of the Godhead—the perfection of all human ex-

[1] Heb., vi. 30. [2] Rev., iii. 11.

cellence—united in one being—and presented to us as the object of supreme desire. If it were not for the stupidity which sin begets, what should prevent our joyful, rapturous consecration to the Son of Man? And then, if any doctrine can be conceived to be capable of filling the souls of men with boundless confidence and admiration: if any system can be supposed to fasten itself with all power upon the understanding and heart of men: if there is any thing which can be taught, apprehended, and made efficacious, so as to lead captive the intellectual and moral nature we possess: surely all these transcendent conditions will be allowed by every renewed soul, to unite supremely in the way of life revealed to men. Now this glorious God, this loving Saviour, this divine doctrine, are to be glorified, illustrated, adorned by us. The one way of doing this they all express alike; it is by those fruits of a New Obedience which they call Good Works. Who shall wonder that true, loving, and heroic spirits, full of the power of divine grace, comprehend this voice from heaven! Who shall wonder that they who are sold under sin, believe them to be mad!

III.—1. I have shown in another place, that the will of the Creator, and not his own will, is the rule by which every creature is obliged to regulate his conduct: and that the will of the Saviour, and not his own will, is the rule by which every sinner is obliged to regulate his conduct. The only living and true God, is both the Creator and Saviour of the sinful creature man: and therefore, his revealed will is the absolute and infallible rule, according to which all that he can accept as a Good Work, must be performed by us. This revealed will of God is the highest, and the only perfect expression to us, of that eternal and ineffaceable distinction in things which we intend by the words Good and Evil: and the faculty which he gave us, in creation, to discern and to be influenced by what was good, and the Moral Law which he wrote on our hearts, afforded us the means of discerning his will and the rule of obedience to it. The difficulty which now exists, is produced by the shock our nature received in the fall of man: whereby, both our ability to discern good, and the law within our hearts prompting us to pursue it, are so deeply and fatally deranged by the entrance of evil into the essence of our being. What we need, therefore, to enable us unto perfect Good Works, is to recover a perfect knowledge of the will of God, and a perfect ability to regulate our conduct by it. Neither of

these is possible in this life: so that perfect Good Works are impossible to us. But through Jesus Christ revealed to us, and revealed in us, the knowledge of the will of God, and our ability to discern and keep it, are so far restored to us, that our imperfect endeavours to regulate our conduct by it, are accepted of God, as Good Works, for Christ's sake. All idea of a sinner gaining salvation, wholly or in part by Good Works, is, therefore, utterly absurd. It is true that what remaining knowledge we have of the will of God, by nature—as just explained—is so far good: and what we can gain further by meditation, and through the diligent use of our rational and moral faculties, turned upon ourselves, is also good: and what we can gain further still, by the careful observation of the conduct of God, whether in creation or providence, is also good. I do not exclude any source of the knowledge of the will of God: and I have endeavoured, in the previous Treatise, to demonstrate every source of this knowledge. It is, however, the word of God, revealed to us in the sacred Scriptures, which is the complete expression of his will to us, as the rule of all Good Works, and as the way of life unto us. And passing by the insurmountable difficulties which beset every other rule of conduct, by which we hope to please God; the perfection and simplicity of the one afforded in his blessed word, leave us without excuse for any shortcoming. The majesty of him who gave it—the blessedness of those who keep it—and the glory and felicity to which it conducts us—make the sin, the folly, and the ruin of all who reject it, alike sure and just. It is Jesus Christ who has abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.[1]

2. There are many questions of the highest practical importance, and of the most pregnant force in all scientific enquiry into systematic truth touching divine things; which connect themselves in a decisive manner with the foregoing statements. Some of them may be mentioned and briefly disclosed, but not discussed here.

(*a*) At the head of these we may place Christian Liberty, and Liberty of Conscience. The Church of the living God is the Bride of the Lamb, and her freedom from the bondage of Satan, of sin, of the law itself, much more of the commandments, traditions and devices of men; has been purchased by the blood of

[1] 2 Tim., i. 10.

her divine Husband and Lord. That freedom, in its very essence, consists in her deliverance from all her enemies, that she might consecrate herself to the service and love of her Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness throughout all generations. The God she serves and loves, is the only Lord of the conscience of her children: he alone can penetrate its depths, he alone can cleanse and sanctify it, he alone can give it peace: and every attempt, even when made in his own blessed name, to bind it or to loose it otherwise than by his word and Spirit, is an atrocious usurpation of his prerogatives.

(*b*) Nearly related to these great topics is all that belongs to what is called Implicit Faith, and to the just claims of tender consciences. Whatever hath for it the explicit authority of God, and whatever flows by necessary consequence from that which hath the explicit authority of God; all this is of explicit faith, because it is clearly the Will of God. But nothing else is of faith at all: and to imply the Will of God without warrant from him, is in effect to substitute our own will, or the will of those to whom we render a blind obedience, for the Will of God: by either method dishonouring God, and putting our own soul in peril. The folly of doing this ourselves is no greater than the cruel impiety of forcing upon the consciences of others, what nothing but bigotry, fanaticism, or superstition, could make endurable to our own. The right of private judgment is not only sacred in its own nature; but the idea of Good Works is wholly absurd, unless they be performed with the full and free approval of the soul. To disregard the scruples of our own conscience, is to assail the very citadel of our spiritual life: while to contemn that of others, is to violate the very life of Christian charity.

(*c*) The power of the civil magistrate in things sacred, and the authority of synods and councils with regard to faith and morals, are the last of these great associated topics which seem to demand a certain recognition here. Of human affairs, some are wholly spiritual, some are wholly temporal, and some are mixed, participating of both. There ought to be no question, and in all societies that are free and Christian there is no question, that things purely temporal appertain, by the Will of God, exclusively to the civil power. There is just as little, that things purely spiritual do not appertain to the civil power, but to the kingdom of God, now under the form of the Gospel Church. All

real difficulties concern things that in their nature are mixed. Concerning these, the most obvious general solution is, that the civil and the spiritual powers being both ordained by God, each in its own sphere and for its own ends, it follows, that of things mixed, that part which is temporal appertains to the civil power, and that part which is spiritual appertains to the kingdom of God. What remains subject to both jurisdictions, after such principles are applied to them, must be accepted as remaining so by the Will of God : and in what cases the decision of one jurisdiction shall draw after it consequences that may appertain to the other, must be determined by the prevailing nature of each particular case ; respect being had to the liberty of the Church on one side, and the authority of the State on the other.

(*d*) The authority of synods and councils, like the authority of the State concerning things spiritual, has been a most fruitful source of evil to the kingdom of God ; and yet the former topic, like the latter, is singularly clear in the general principles on which it rests. Supposing a government, no matter of what kind, to be divinely established in the bosom of the kingdom of God on earth ; it follows that the authority of this government is precisely as extensive as God has declared, neither more nor less. But God has made no declaration on the subject, except in the sacred Scriptures. The question, therefore, is one of pure revelation. Meeting it in this incidental manner, I will only state its great foundations. It is obvious that revelation being admitted, they who presume to add any thing to it, or take any thing from it, must be themselves inspired, and must prove this in the first instance. It follows, that all uninspired synods and councils are absolutely limited to the exposition of what is already revealed : and that all ecclesiastical power is absolutely limited to the explication, enforcement, defence, and extension of revealed truth. But I have already shown that it is only of things purely spiritual, and of things mixed, so far as they are spiritual, that spiritual authority can be predicated at all. Whence it follows, in the first place, that the sanctions of spiritual authority must be exclusively spiritual : and in the second place, that they must have outward force exclusively upon those who voluntarily submit themselves to them. Their validity depends absolutely upon their ratification by Jesus Christ, the only Lawgiver, Ruler, and Judge of his Church : and that ratification will, except in cases

of miraculous interposition by him,. be openly declared in the day of judgment. The result, therefore, is this: synods and councils, lawfully constituted in the name and by the authority of the glorified Redeemer, may, with divine authority, and at the peril of their souls, expound, declare, and teach the revealed Will of God unto salvation: every human being lawfully related to them, who comes to the knowledge of their deliverances and acts, must obey them if they are true, or refuse to obey them if they are false, on the peril of his soul: and whether they be true or false, must be determined according to the word and Spirit of God, by each child of God for himself, at his own proper peril. There is a government in the kingdom of God: but the kingdom itself is made up of those, all of whom are both kings and priests; and the government over them is under Christ their Lord, and its acts are valid only with the Word and through the Spirit of God.

3. After what has been said, a few general statements may suffice. Absolutely considered, the cause of our New Obedience, and of all Good Works flowing from it, is the grace of God dwelling in us, by reason of our New Creation by the Holy Ghost.[1] Considered instrumentally, it is through Saving Faith and Repentance unto Life that all Good Works are wrought. For it is through Repentance that we turn from all evil which God hates, unto all good which God commends: and it is through Faith, which works by love and purifies the heart, that the just live and overcome the world. The great end of all Good Works is the glory of God.[2] To which are to be added, as the very manner of glorifying God through our own Good Works, two ends subordinate only to the great end; namely, our own salvation, and the comfort and edification of all around us.[3] The intimate nature, therefore, of the New Obedience and Good Works may be summarily stated, thus:

(*a*) It is the motive with which all these acts are performed, which is the first element in determining their real nature. The same outward act might, according to the motive which prompts it, be a heinous sin, or an exalted proof of holiness. The offering up of Isaac is a just illustration.

(*b*) No work can, therefore, be Good, in the sense here intended, unless it be in accordance with the known will of God.

[1] Gal., v. 19–25; Heb., xiii. 20, 21.
[2] 1 Cor., vi. 19, 20; x. 31.
[3] Matt., v. 13–16; Phil., ii. 12–16; 2 Pet., i. 10, 11.

For Good Works are the exercise of our New Obedience—and where there is no will of God there can be no motive to obey it—and, therefore, no New Obedience. This puts an end to all works of supererogation—of voluntary humility—of will-worship—and of obedience to the commandments of men. It also shows why the virtues of men, naturally considered, being wholly disconnected with the New Obedience, have no adequate motive in us, and no adequate relation to the will of God.

(*c*) None who are out of Christ can perform Good Works, in the scriptural sense. Neither the persons, nor the services of sinful men, can ever be accepted of God on their own account, because of their manifold imperfections: and for these imperfections there is no remedy but the righteousness of Christ. Out of Christ, there can be no love of God in the heart of a sinner—no saving light in his understanding—no holiness of conscience or will. In default of these things New Obedience and its fruits are impossible.

(*d*) Good Works must be directed to an end approved of God; by means right in themselves, and suitable to the end; and in a manner proper in itself, and answerable both to the end and the means. For if the end is not lawful, it is sinful even to desire it, much less to seek it. If the means are unrighteous, it is an attempt to serve God with the wages of iniquity, and to make him a partner in our guilt. And if the manner is contrary to the end and the means, it is seeking to make God the author of confusion and disorder, and tempting his miraculous power in support of our folly.

(*e*) These multiplied limitations unite in a single point: the heart must be right in the sight of God. Then the children of God need have no slavish fears of going astray. For the New Covenant which God makes with their souls, and under which all their New Obedience is rendered, is a covenant wherein his laws are written on their hearts, and put into their minds by God himself; and wherein, from the least unto the greatest, they all know the Lord; and in the light and power of that knowledge strive after the things commanded in that law.[1]

[1] Heb., viii. 8–12; Jer., xxxi. 31–34.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SPIRITUAL WARFARE.

I. 1. The conflict involved in our New Obedience and Good Works.—2. Its Nature and Necessity.—3. Its Existence necessarily implies the Truth of the Spiritual System Revealed to us, and in us.—4. Our perpetual Witness-bearing for Christ.—5. Our incessant Working together with God.—6. Our continual Suffering together with Jesus: Outward Fellowship—inward Participation thereof.—7. Sublime Efficacy of this Warfare—with the Cause and Manner thereof.—8. Intimate Relation between the divinely appointed Means of Grace, and our Spiritual Warfare.—9. The Chastenings of the Lord: his Fatherly Discipline: the Hidings of his Face.—II. 1. Our Spiritual Enemies: Nature of their Enmity to us: Implacable Hostility between them and Christ.—2. All of them resolved into three: Their Union with each other: Vanquished by Christ—vanquished through Christ by us.—3. Our Warfare with the Flesh.—4. Our Warfare with the World.—5. Our Warfare with the Devil.—6. The Armour of Light.—7. The Victory.

I.—1. The existence of each human being is, indeed, identical and uninterrupted from the moment of its personal commencement, onward through time and eternity. But what vast changes does it incur at death, and at the resurrection! Not inferior in its importance to either of them—and perfectly decisive of the character of both of them—is that wonderful spiritual change which our Saviour calls the New Birth—and which he plainly tells us must occur before we can realize or enter the kingdom of heaven.[1] Each one of these immense changes—regeneration—death—resurrection—while it leaves our personal existence identical, self-conscious, and continuous, produces on us results the most profound, and is followed by consequences to us which are absolutely eternal. The results and consequences of death and the resurrection can be realized, in this life, only through faith, even by the regenerate; they can be known in their absolute nature, only after we shall have died—after we shall have risen. Those which follow the New Birth are not only realized by us in the same way as the others—namely, through faith; but to the whole extent that we are

[1] John, iii. 3–5.

actually made partakers of them in this life, their absolute nature is made known to us, just as the others will be when we shall have personally incurred them. For it is in this life only, that men are born again, and it is between our New Birth and our death that the change produced on us by that New Birth alone, manifests itself simply and in its peculiar manner. I have endeavoured, with the greatest care, to explain in the two preceding Books, the nature—the reality—the cause—the author—the manner—the instrument—the results—the consequences, of this great change—under the continual exhibition of the work in us: and in the preceding chapters of this Book, I have endeavoured to point out distinctly, the chief offices, both towards God and towards our fellow-creatures, which are relevant to it, and which are imposed by it. But in the manifestation of all these offices of Christianity by us—in every part of our New Obedience—in all our Good Works—in all our endeavours to lead lives of Faith and Penitence—we find ourselves constantly exposed to perils, surrounded by temptations, and beset by difficulties. We are not, so to speak, left free to follow the Lord, whom we love: we are hindered in the course in which, for his sake and at his command, we have resolved to walk: we are compelled to let go our hold on eternal life, or to take up arms and do battle for our crown. This is a new phase in our Christian life: one we had, perhaps, never anticipated: one, as we soon find, universal, unavoidable, full of peril on one side and blessedness on the other. It is this which Christians call *The Spiritual Warfare*,[1] and which I am now to explain as briefly as I can.

2. The one great condition of the offer of salvation is, that he to whom it is offered should be a sinner of the human race. The one great motive presented to that sinner is, on the one side that he may escape the wrath to come—on the other that he may obtain eternal life; the sum of all being salvation—which is the very end of his faith. Having won Christ—that is being found in him; then the perpetual exhortation of the Gospel to us is, that forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, we should press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.[2] The object set before the child of God is manifold. He is to guard, as he would guard the life of his soul, that which God has

[1] 1 Tim., i. 18; vi. 12; 2 Tim., iv. 7; 1 Cor., ix. 25–27. [2] Phil., iii 3–14.

already given to him—an interest, namely, in the blood of Christ. He is to strive, also, with all his might, to increase the treasure which the Lord has committed to him. And he is to labour, in season and out of season with all diligence, to make sure the eternal possession of this boundless riches of grace. In the whole process of this great work of salvation it must necessarily occur —nay, it is the very manner of the work itself—that the children of the kingdom glorify God, and bless their fellow-creatures, as step by step they advance in their own career. In like manner and in like degree—to vanquish Satan—to overcome the world—and to crucify the flesh—are as real necessities of their victorious progress, through grace, as the treasures of wisdom and love which they defend, accumulate, and secure, are proofs of the bounty of the Lord. And the personal result is, that fighting the good fight of faith—warring a good warfare[1]—striving for an incorruptible crown, they are more than conquerors, through him that loved them.[2]

3. It is indeed a warfare: yet the Holy Ghost declares it to be good. It is a fight we cannot escape: yet a good fight, even that of faith. And how much does its necessity, its nature, its existence, involve and explain? How could an estate of this kind exist for us, except upon the precise conditions of our being, revealed by God? Once innocent, then fallen, now regenerate, and struggling upward toward our original perfection, the necessary phenomena are the very incidents of this warfare. How could such a conflict occur, except amidst a confused, probationary state of things, where good and evil are inextricably involved, each striving for the mastery? What would it signify, if the state in which it reigns were final: if it did not lead immediately to another state, and if the relation of this state to that, and the relation of this warfare to the coming retribution, were not absolute and decisive? On the other hand, with the word of God revealing to us endless glory and perdition, a divine Saviour, and an eternal judgment; what is there that this Spiritual Warfare may not signify, may not involve and explain?

4. We are witnesses for Christ through all ages, and unto the uttermost part of the earth:[3] and we are compassed about with that great cloud of witnesses who have gone before us, and

[1] 1 Tim., i. 18; vi. 12.
[2] 1 Cor., ix. 25; Rom., viii. 37.
[3] Acts, i. 8.

who testify around us.[1] He for whom we testify, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. He is the finisher, as well as the author of our faith: he who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself. Constant in our testimony, as well as in faith and godliness, we have only to consider him, and then lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us.[2] Christ himself condescends to be called the faithful witness.[3] And the more prompt the children of the wicked one are to cry out against every faithful witness for Christ, Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live;[4] the more solemn and emphatic is the response from heaven, The world was not worthy of them![5] Whether men will hear or whether they will forbear, it is equally the duty of the followers of Christ to testify unto them the will of God.[6] Adding nothing to the testimony of God, unless they would have added to themselves every curse written therein; taking nothing from that testimony, unless they would have their part in every promise written therein taken from them:[7] they who name the name of Jesus are set forth as living epistles, known and read of all men, wherein Christ has manifestly declared his Gospel, written with the Spirit of the living God in the tables of their heart, even as God wrote his law on tables of stone.[8] The way of the wicked is as darkness, and they know not at what they stumble: but the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day![9] This whole witness-bearing is a spiritual martyrdom for Christ—a perpetual confession of him—the daily warfare of our good fight of faith.

5. In like manner, as it is the will of God concerning us, that having had our eyes opened, and having recived the Holy Ghost from him, we should be his witnesses unto all men of all that we have seen and heard;[10] so, also, every one, according to the grace of God which is given unto him, becomes a labourer together with God, a worker together with him, both in planting and in watering every part of God's husbandry amongst men.[11] Or, as

[1] Heb., xii. 1.
[2] Heb., xii. 1–3.
[3] Rev., i. 5.
[4] Acts, xx. 22.
[5] Heb., xi. 38.
[6] Ezek., iii. 11–27.
[7] Rev., xxii. 18, 19.
[8] 2 Cor., iii. 2, 3.
[9] Prov., iv. 18, 19.
[10] Acts, ix. 17; xxii. 13–15.
[11] 1 Cor., iii. 9; 2 Cor., vi. 1.

it is sometimes expressed, we become soldiers of Jesus Christ, whose fidelity is tested by the manner in which we bear hardness, and do valiantly for the Captain of our salvation, who was himself made perfect through sufferings.[1] One of the most heroic of our fellow-soldiers, when the time of his departure was at hand, and he was ready to be offered, at the close of a life that has no parallel, calmly and trustfully said, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearings.[2] But all these services, glorious as they are, and infinite as is the reward which attends them, are of that nature that no novice, no sluggard, none who are self-indulgent or self-seeking, can perform them at all: of that nature, that in a world like this, the most enlightened and the most devoted cannot discharge them, except as heroes do battle, where all is risked upon every conflict. And we ourselves are of that nature, that the severest toils of all, are those which fit us for our great labour of love; the most perilous conflicts of all, those which are waged within our own souls. See what that heroic soldier of Jesus Christ, that sublime labourer together with God, to whom I have alluded, says concerning the matter and the manner, wherein he approved himself a servant of God in this Spiritual Warfare: In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.[3] Here are thirty-six categories of our Spiritual Warfare fought through by one soldier of the Cross, under the single and all-engrossing proposition of the Lord, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.[4] And he

[1] Heb., ii. 10; 2 Tim., ii. 3; Psalm lx. 12.
[2] 2 Tim., iv. 6–8.
[3] 2 Cor., vi. 4–10.
[4] Matt., xvi. 24.

has said to us, under inspiration of the Holy Ghost, Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ: followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.[1]

6. One more great and unavoidable necessity is laid upon every child of God; one more aspect of our Spiritual Warfare, in addition to our witness-bearing for him, and our participation as fellow-labourers with him. We must be sufferers together with Jesus. I will show him, said the Lord to Ananias when he told him Saul was praying, and bade him go to him, how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.[2] Many years afterwards, as Paul went bound in the Spirit to Jerusalem, after bearing the name of the Lord before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel; he said to his brethren whom he had collected at Miletus, that he knew not what would befall him, save that the Holy Ghost witnessed in every city that bonds and afflictions waited for him.[3] Yea, said he, in one of his last testimonies, all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.[4] And the Lord had plainly said to his Apostles, Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.[5] When we reflect on the contents of the Christian Scriptures, and on the nature and design of the Gospel Church; the history of the human race furnishes nothing more decisive concerning the moral nature of man, than his cruel hatred of Jesus and his disciples, and his ferocious prostitution of the name and doctrine of Jesus to ends the most opposite from those he commanded. There is no form of human society, no stage of human civilization, no aspect of human thought, which has not, within the past eighteen centuries, polluted itself with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. Jew and Pagan, infidel and heretic, Mohammedan and Papist and Hindoo—all alike—hate the only Saviour who pities them, the only Redeemer who can deliver them. To pass by every form of persecution, except the very highest, there can be no doubt that all the governments in the world united have not executed capitally the hundredth part as many malefactors, as Papal Rome alone has caused to be murdered of true followers of Jesus, merely because they were his true followers! Drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, is the fearful description which God gives of her, The mother of harlots and abominations

[1] 1 Cor., xi. 1; Heb., vi. 12. [2] Acts, ix. 16. [3] Acts, xx. 22, 23.
[4] 2 Tim., iii. 12. [5] Matt., x. 22.

of the earth.[1] But besides this liability to outward sufferings, even unto blood, for Christ's sake, which enters so conspicuously into the warfare of his followers: there is a sense, altogether spiritual, in which their participation in all his Humiliation, is an indispensable preparation for their participation in all his Exaltation. Those outward sufferings with him, Christ will compensate a hundredfold even in this life, when that is good for us; and in the world to come, will repay them with eternal life.[2] But our inward participation of his sufferings, is the very method of preparing us for the inward participation of his triumph; and the very heat and fury of the great war lie precisely there; there the victory is won or lost! To know Christ, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, we must be made conformable unto his death.[3] Wherefore, the exhortation is, Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.[4]

7. It is mere folly to go to Christ, if our desire and purpose are to live in sin. On the other hand, if through grace we are resolved to crucify sin, we need not dread the warfare which must follow. The Holy Ghost, as we have seen, declares the fight of faith to be good—the Spiritual Warfare to be good. That being so, it matters not if the battle be fought to-day on our faithful testimony for Christ—and to-morrow on our earnest labours for his cause—and the third day on our patient suffering for his name: or whether it be joined, fierce and decisive, on all at once—and won like those great victories which decide the fate of nations and of races. It matters not: for, either way, the Lord is strength in the day of trouble—yea, in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.[5] And every one in Zion that appears before God, goes from strength to strength; and every one that with open face beholds the glory of the Lord, is changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.[6] Every grace—every truth—every gift, has a power peculiar to itself: and the more it is cherished the more powerful it is. See how sublime even the gift of preternatural strength to Samson was—and how terrible it made him as long as God was with him! Then every grace will unite with every other grace: every

[1] Rev., xvii. *passim.* [2] Mark, x. 28–31. [3] Phil., iii. 10. [4] 1 Pet., i. 13–16.
[5] Nahum, i. 7; Isa., xxvi. 4. [6] Ps. lxxxiv. 7; 2 Cor., iii. 18.

truth with every other truth: every gift with every other gift: and we see how one can put a thousand to flight! And then all grace will unite with all truth: and all truth will unite with all duty: and all duty will unite with all grace: and how can ten thousand stand before two! And then when all are united in one—as they are in the man of God thoroughly furnished for every good work; what can we say less, than that this is according to the working of the mighty power of God in them that believe—and that among all gods there is none like unto Jehovah, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders![1]

8. Nowhere, more than in this aspect of our relation to divine things, does the importance to us of all the means of grace appear. Nothing is more distinctly urged upon us in the Word of God, than that we should grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:[2] nor is any thing taught more clearly, than that this growth is the product of the true knowledge of God through his Word and Spirit—and the result of our union and communion with Christ.[3] It is of the very nature of man, and of all his faculties, that he cannot be absolutely stationary in any thing. With him, it is always progress or decay. The finest emotions vanish—the noblest attainments become obscure—the most exalted powers lose both their temper and their grasp, under habitual neglect and disuse: while improper indulgence can end only in distortion. On the other hand, nothing but the finiteness of our being, can be imagined as capable of setting bounds to the healthful growth of a renewed soul, which, by the grace of God, addresses itself with all diligence and fidelity to him. In doing this, the whole instrumentality which God himself has provided is embraced under the phrase—the Means of Grace; and I have had repeated occasion to mention, in their order, and to explain the use of the chief of these. In every part of our Spiritual Warfare, it is through their use that we are fitted for the discharge of the duties that devolve on us, and it is in their use that we may expect to be victorious through grace. It is not true that any of them—not even the inspired word—have any more than an instrumental efficacy with reference to salvation—that is an efficacy when used by God for our spiritual good: but neither is it true that any of them appointed of God, are destitute of this

[1] Eph., i. 19; Ex., xv. 11. [2] 2 Peter, iii. 18. [3] 1 Peter, ii. 1–12; Eph., iv. 1–24.

instrumental efficacy—nor that any thing else not thus appointed of him, has any efficacy at all towards our growth in grace. To neglect them, is to tempt God : to rest in them, is superstition : to use them prayerfully, diligently, and trustfully, is the heavenly discipline of the soldier of the Cross. Nothing holy, nothing lovely, nothing gentle, nothing tender, nothing heroic, can be conceived of him to whom the ordinances of God are not delightsome : while he to whom they are, has found the way to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

9. Immediately connected with our growth in grace, and with the peculiar method of that growth which attends our Spiritual Warfare ; there is a mode of God's dealing with his people, which is utterly remote from all human thinking. Sometimes for the trial of our faith—sometimes to reveal to us more clearly what is in our hearts—sometimes as a means of more complete deliverance of us—sometimes as a preparation for some special work for which he is fitting us—sometimes to recover us from backsliding, to wean us from besetting sin, or to deliver us from besetting temptation —and very generally as a way of advancing us to higher spiritual attainments, or bestowing upon us very special mercies : God himself seems to enter into conflict with his children. The arrows of the Almighty—said Job—are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit : the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.[1] And David, in his anguish, cried out, O Lord rebuke me not in thy wrath : neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore.[2] Will the Lord cast off for ever, and will he be favourable no more ? Is his mercy clean gone for ever, and doth his promise fail for evermore ? Hath God forgotten to be gracious ? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies ?[3] Lord why castest thou off my soul, why hidest thou thy face from me ? Thy fierce wrath goeth over me ; thy terrors have cut me off.[4] And besides thus hiding his face from us, and withdrawing his presence from us, and striking our souls with his terrors ; he habitually exercises his children under the cross and yoke of outward trials. Ye have forgotten, says the Apostle Paul, the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him : for whom the Lord loveth he

[1] Job, vi. 4. [2] Ps. xxxviii. 1, 2. [3] Ps. lxxvii. 7–9. [4] Ps. lxxxviii. 14, 16.

chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.[1] So universal is this that it is immediately added, If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. And no indication of God's indifference to a sinner can be greater, than that he allows him to prosper in his iniquity; unless it be, that having commenced to chastise him, he lifts his hand off him, while he continues impenitent. And so in immediate connection with the declaration, As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: he adds, Be zealous therefore, and repent.[2] The wisest of mortals, therefore, had divine authority when he said, He that refuseth correction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.[3] Though he slay me, yet will I trust him: yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.[4] Such is the cry of faith —even under the sorest outward trials. And the answer of the Lord is, Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.[5] It is by humility, and obedience, and patient waiting on the Lord, and fervent prayer to him, that the penitent and believing soul prevails with God in all these extremities. Yea, God shall bring forth the righteousness of his children as the light, and their judgment as the noonday.[6] He who gave to Jacob, after his great wrestling with him, his rich blessing and a new name, will not only give to every one that overcometh, a new name—but will write upon him the new name of him that sitteth upon the throne![7]

II.—1. Having explained the nature of our Spiritual Warfare, and pointed out the special duties toward the Captain of our salvation which it involves, together with the influence of the whole upon ourselves: it remains to speak briefly of the enemies with whom this warfare is waged by all who follow Jesus Christ in the Regeneration. They are enemies who resist us in all our attempts to turn to God at first, and in all our endeavours to lead lives of New Obedience afterwards: enemies to our deliverance from sin, and to our growth in holiness: enemies to our very highest and to all our eternal interests. They are still more the enemies of him who loved us and gave himself for us—between

[1] Heb., xii. 5, 6. [2] Rev., iii. 19. [3] Prov., xv. 32.
[4] Job, xiii. 15; Ps. xxiii. 24. [5] Rev., ii. 10. [6] Ps. xxxvii. 6.
[7] Gen., xxxii. 24–29; Rev., ii. 17; iii. 12.

whom and the whole of them the antagonism is so complete, that they require of us, as a condition of their friendship, that we shall renounce his service—and that he considers our friendship with them enmity to him. The very warfare itself is based on our identification with the Son of God: it is fought by us as soldiers of the Cross: and the victory won, however blessed for us, is for the glory of his grace! The possibility of such a state of case in the universe of God, grounds itself on the twofold fact of the existence of sin in that universe, and of the purpose of God to retrieve the universe from its pollution. Sin is that accursed thing which God hates, and upon which he cannot look with the least allowance. It was that which made us his enemies: it is because we turn from it to him, through Christ by grace, that every enemy of his assails us: it is because our recovery from sin is only begun, not perfected in this life, that this warfare involves the salvation of our souls, as well as the glory of God. And thus the actual state of all things, in every part of the existence of every human being, considered as it actually is, and considered as the word of God declares it to be, presents us with a perpetual demonstration of that Gospel whereby life and immortality are brought to light.

2. As I have intimated before, the Spiritual Warfare of which I speak here is predicated only of the followers of Christ. It is the means whereby they vindicate their New Obedience: the means whereby they win from their enemies the freedom to perform every Good Work: rights—all of them—as I have before shown, for which countless multitudes have suffered the loss of all things, and counted that loss gain. Doubtless there is a warfare between these same enemies and every human soul that is not given over to believe a lie, that it may be damned: for though they be transcendently enemies of Christ and his disciples, they are also enemies of whatever Christ, or the natural conscience, or reason itself will approve as true or good unto salvation. But it is the high, fierce, decisive warfare between the children of God and the flesh, the world, and the Devil, of which I speak continually in this chapter. These are the great enemies of our souls. Under the banner of one or other of them, every foe to divine grace assails us: nay, it is one or other of these, no matter how cunningly disguised, that we find discomfited after every victory we win, that we find mocking us every time we

are overcome. And such is their fidelity to each other, and so inseparable is their union with each other, that every triumph either of them wins, is shared by all, and every decisive blow inflicted upon one wounds them all. These are the enemies whom our Lord has conquered, led captive, and openly triumphed over. And now, in the way of the complete deliverance of the children of the Kingdom, and the perfect fitting of them for the right service and enjoyment of God in this life, and the eternal service and enjoyment of him in the life to come; he leads forth every one of them, fighting by their side, and wins for them victories analogous to his own.

3. I will add a few words concerning each of these implacable enemies of all Gospel holiness, and concerning our warfare with each of them. Considering our race one, with a common nature, and of one blood, which the Scriptures continually assert, each individual of that race is, nevertheless, a separate person; and, since the fall of the first parents of the race, and by reason of it, the common nature is depraved, and every individual participating of that nature by ordinary generation, necessarily participates in its depravity. The New Birth, which is wrought by the Holy Ghost in the soul of the elect of God, who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, is a new creation of the individual soul, and its restoration to the image of God, lost by the fall of man. Restored, in that Regeneration, to the image of God in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, every advance of the soul in this divine life is an advance in its conformity to God: and every endeavour to maintain the posture any soul may have reached, or to advance from one degree of grace and strength to another, is contrary to the desires, devices, lusts, and impulses of its depraved nature, that is, of the flesh; and subjects it, on one side, to the necessity of a new victory over the flesh, and, on the other, to the peril of a victory by the flesh over it. I am aware that the reality and the nature of the dealings of God with man in creation, providence, and grace, are involved in these brief statements; but I insist that these statements accord precisely with all those dealings, as revealed by God to man, and in man. Seeing that the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;[1] and that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of

[1] Rom., viii. 7.

God, which are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned:[1] it follows, not only that the flesh cannot be amended, but that, if we are Christ's, we must crucify the flesh, with its affections and lusts;[2] and that our old man must be crucified with Christ, if the body of sin is to be destroyed, or we are to be delivered from the service of sin.[3] To walk in the Spirit, and to fulfil the lust of the flesh, are so completely opposites, one of the other, that the Scriptures declare the Spirit and the flesh to be contrary the one to the other, and utterly antagonistic to each other. As our English version has it, the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.[4] And the Apostle proceeds to illustrate that universal truth, by declaring to us the works of the flesh, and the fruit of the Spirit, in contrast with each other. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.[5] Touching all these things, on one side and the other, this profound distinction is to be always borne in mind, namely, that no fruit of the Spirit is possible in the unrenewed soul, whereas the renewed soul, still dwelling in sinful flesh, is liable to be assailed through every work of the flesh, and is liable to fall under every assault. Receiving the first fruits of the Spirit at our Regeneration, and growing afterwards through the continual increase of them; the divine power which dwells in us, and increases through grace, may indeed continually subdue every work that lusts against it; and the final triumph is sure, through him who loved us and gave himself for us. But who ever saw a soldier of the cross, who marched from victory to victory, never overcome, and bearing no scars from this life and death struggle, with that native depravity of which sinners make so light? On the contrary, how innumerable are the triumphs of the flesh over the followers of Christ; and how certain is it, that but for his grace these triumphs of the flesh over his followers would be universal and final!

4. In a peculiar sense the Flesh is our inward enemy. The

[1] 1 Cor., ii. 14. [2] Gal., v. 24. [3] Rom., vi. 6.
[4] Gal., v. 16, 17. [5] Gal. v. 19–23.

other two, and especially the World, are more particularly outward enemies. If we had crucified the Flesh, the sorest part of our warfare would be accomplished. As things are, with our own hearts but imperfectly sanctified, and surrounded by fellow-creatures the great mass of whom are such as we were when we were servants of sin, and all the remainder are nearly as imperfectly sanctified as we are ourselves; the advantages we derive from our fellow-soldiers who cannot protect themselves, can offer to us no adequate security—while the perils with which our fellow-sinners threaten us, are instant, fatal, and innumerable. By the allurements of vice—by the pollution of evil example—by the seduction of all sinful indulgences—by the perversion of all false teaching—by flattering every unruly passion—by opposing and discouraging us in all duty—by threats, by violence, by robbery, by persecution, by death itself; alas! by how many countless and nameless ways, are God's children put in jeopardy by the enmity of the World! Be ye not conformed to this world—is the express command of God—but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.[1] If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.[2] The friendship of the world is enmity with God: whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.[3] And our Saviour explains the reason of statements which seem so remarkable to the children of the world. I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you; ye know that it hated me before it hated you.[4] The actual posture of the world is, that it is in universal revolt against God—that it lies under his wrath and curse—that it has crucified his Son whom he sent to redeem it, and murdered his saints of whom it was not worthy—and that it is kept in store by God, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.[5] The actual relation of God's children to it is, that they constitute a Kingdom under Messiah the Prince, which, though in the world, is not of it; a kingdom which, through grace, they are appointed to maintain and to advance through all ages, while God shall remove every diadem, and take off every crown, and exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high, and overturn till nothing that can be shaken

[1] Rom., xii. 2. [2] 1 John, ii. 15. [3] James, iv. 4.
[4] John, xv. 18, 19; xvii. 19. [5] 2 Peter, iii. 7.

is left, and shake heaven and earth : and then he whose right it is shall come—and God will give it him.[1] Wherefore our very faith is the victory that overcometh the world :[2] which, by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, is crucified unto us, and we unto it.[3] Considered in this light, our Spiritual Warfare with this great enemy of our salvation, has two aspects, both of which are eminently peculiar to us as soldiers of the cross. The first is, that our duty to Christ obliges us to discharge with perfect simplicity and fidelity, every obligation binding upon us with reference to our relations in this ruined world ; thereby at once acquitting our own souls, and adorning the doctrine we profess. The other is, that the same duty obliges us to acquit ourselves as good soldiers, in our endeavours to recover the dominion of our Lord over our rebellious fellow-creatures, to their unspeakable blessedness, and to the glory of his great name. So that, through the unsearchable riches of the grace, knowledge, and wisdom of God, the salvation of our own soul is grounded in our Spiritual Warfare with the Flesh ; and in like manner the salvation of others, through our endeavours, is grounded in our Spiritual Warfare with the World.

5. It is under the banner of Satan, that the Flesh and the World both assail the followers of Christ. He is called the god of this world, and is declared to be the author of that blindness of mind of those who believe not the glorious Gospel of Christ, through which they are lost.[4] The Lord Jesus, speaking of the effects of his crucifixion, declared that one of them would be the casting out of the prince of this world :[5] and we are told it was he who put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray him ;[6] he whom Jesus led captive when he ascended up on high, openly triumphing over him.[7] This great and wicked Spirit, the leader of the revolt in heaven—the seducer of our first parents—the implacable enemy of the Saviour of men—is represented throughout the Scriptures as having thrown off all allegiance to God, and as being actuated by relentless hate against the whole family of man, and most especially against God's Elect from amongst our fallen race. By the fall of man—of which his temptation was the procuring cause—he acquired dominion over the world

[1] Ezek., xxi. 26, 27 ; Heb., xii. 26–28.
[2] 1 John, v. 4.
[3] Gal., vi. 14.
[4] 2 Cor., iv. 3, 4.
[5] John, xii. 31.
[6] John, xiii. 2.
[7] Eph., iv. 8 ; Col., ii. 15.

and over the human race : a dominion defeated and absolutely annulled by the sentence of God, so far as his Elect were concerned—and limited by the same sentence so far as the world was concerned—but left untouched so far as related to all the obstinately impenitent.[1] No portion of this wonderful sentence of God, rendered after the breach of the Covenant of Works—and to be reviewed at the day of judgment—was more precise, than the decree of eternal enmity between Christ and his followers on one part, and the Devil and his children on the other.[2] Quenchless hate and deadly warfare between this primeval murderer, liar, and seducer, and every soldier of the cross of Christ, is as much a part of that soldier's divine vocation, as it is a part of it to follow the Captain of his salvation. And he may as confidently expect the Devil to torment him with temptations, to assail him with accusations, to overwhelm him with terrors and alarms, and to stir up the flesh and the world against him ; as he sincerely endeavours to follow Jesus in the regeneration. Nor is there any security for us, but in open, manful, and universal combat. To have peace with the flesh, it must be crucified : to have safety with the world, it must be overcome : the Devil flies from us only when we resist him, stedfast in the faith.[3] In all these things it is through him that loved us, that we are more than conquerors.[4] And they who lift up the song of triumph, when Michael and his angels finally cast out the great dragon and his angels ; are they who overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony ; and they loved not their lives unto the death.[5]

6. In this warfare for our souls, Repentance toward God, and Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, are as conspicuous as they are in every other part of our salvation. Here, as everywhere, these great graces of the Spirit, these fundamental Offices of the Christian life—decide our destiny. With a living Faith in Christ, the Flesh, the World, and the Devil can do no more than hurry us to our Father's house, or secure for us there a brighter crown. For such ends, the loss of all things may well be counted gain. Or if they cleave us down—our courage and our strength return with the first pang of true Repentance : and then our armour of light blazes again in the thick of the fight. Where-

[1] Gen., iii. 15–19 ; Rom., viii. 19–23. [2] Gen., iii. 15.
[3] 1 Pet., v. 9 ; James, iv. 7. [4] Rom., viii. 37. [5] Rev., xii. 11.

fore, let us take unto us the whole armour of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Having our loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and our feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace ; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked : taking, also, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God : praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. For we wrestle not in a Warfare that is carnal—but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places : and so the weapons of our Warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.[1]

7. It is the universal principle of our Christian life, that in proportion as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also our consolation aboundeth by Christ.[2] It is not surprising, therefore, that we should even glory in tribulations, since we know that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed ; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.[3] My grace, said our Lord, is sufficient for thee : for my strength is made perfect in weakness.[4] The first response of his servant was, I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me :[5] his habitual response was, I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me :[6] and his matured and final testimony was, Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.[7] This is the career of a true soldier of the cross : the path of the just, like the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Though there be few who even approach very near to this sublime standard, none apparently, who are not many times discomfited by their spiritual enemies, many needing from mere weakness to be borne in the bosom of the good Shepherd of our souls, and nearly all to be led gently along by his hand : nevertheless there is not one of the innumerable multitude, who will be finally vanquished and destroyed by God's enemies and theirs. It is not

[1] Eph., vi. 13–18; 2 Cor., x. 4. [2] 2 Cor., i. 5. [3] Rom., v. 3–5.
[4] 2 Cor., xii. 9. [5] 2 Cor., xii. 9. [6] Phil., iv. 13. [7] 1 Cor., xv. 57.

possible for us to understand how, as the result of such a career, such a probation as I have attempted to trace, any should escape destruction, except upon the conditions which actually exist, and by means of the forces which are actually applied; nor yet, upon those conditions, and under the application of those forces, how any could perish. Without the divine support continually given to believers and accepted by them, even they must be destroyed. When judgment begins at the house of God, what shall the end of them be that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?[1] And yet, how can the righteous perish, when they have a throne of divine grace to which they may always come boldly, and at which they may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need?[2] Nay, when God himself is their refuge and strength—a very present help in trouble?[3] To him that overcometh, is the glorious promise of the exalted Saviour, I will give to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne.[4]

[1] 1 Pet., iv. 17, 18. [2] Heb., iv. 16. [3] Psalm xlvi. 1. [4] Rev., iii. 21.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE INFALLIBLE RULE OF FAITH AND DUTY.

I. 1. Relation of the divine Word to the divine Life in the human Soul.—2. All Law implies the Existence both of the Author of it, and the Subject of it.—3. Infinite Lawgiver: Discovery, Comprehension, and Use of any and whatever Law of God.—4. Regulative Principles of Universal Morality: their Nature, Certainty, Origin, and Obligation.—5. Supremacy of the Moral Sense in Fallen Man: Supremacy of the Moral Law in the Universe: The Saviour.—6. Relation of the Moral Law to the Matter and the Form of Salvation: Infinite Grace.—7. Indispensable Necessity to Fallen Man of divine Guidance and Support in the Way of Life.—8. Supreme Relation of the Revealed Will of God to Salvation: Infallible Rule of Faith and Obedience.—II. 1. The true End of our Existence, and the Mode of attaining it, taught only and taught fully in the Sacred Scriptures.—2. What we ought to believe concerning God, considered as the Saviour of Sinners, is matter of pure Revelation.—3. That Revelation the Infallible Rule of Faith: Its Completeness and Efficacy.—4. Relation of Righteousness to Faith—Truth to Duty: the Word of God the Infallible Rule of the New Obedience.—5. Divine Restatement of the Moral Law, and divine Regeneration of the human Soul: The Power of God unto Salvation.—6. All the Work and all the Institutions of God, have Relevancy to the Faith and Righteousness revealed by him, and to the Rule thereof.—7. The Saviour of the World the central Object of all Truth revealed to our Faith, and of all Duty required by the Moral Law.—8. The Sum and Scope of the Moral Law, considered with direct Reference to Christ, and to those who believe on him.—9. Mediatorial Work of Christ—Universal and Unalterable Law of God—Infallible Rule of Faith and Practice—Infinite Righteousness and Grace of God.—10. Position of the Sacred Scriptures as thus ascertained.

I.—1. It has been proved, and repeatedly stated, that man created in the image of God, and abiding in that condition, would have perceived habitually what was true, and chosen what was good, and thus would have found the habitual service and enjoyment of God, his natural and his blessed condition in a universe free from sin. It has also been proved, and repeatedly stated, that even in that condition of sinless purity, unclouded reason, and abounding felicity, man, being fallible, and dependent on God in every sense, could not, of himself, and if strictly tried, have perpetually maintained his condition, much less risen to a higher state of being. God, who was the fountain of his being,

must also have been the fountain to him of light and strength. We cannot conceive of a created being who is not dependent upon God, and, as compared with him, imperfect and fallible; nor can we conceive that an imperfect and fallible creature, can dispense with the perpetual presence and fruition of God in the pursuit of what is true and good, any more than a created and dependent being can dispense with him and live. How much more obvious is this necessity for divine light and strength when, instead of being merely fallible, we are actually fallen and depraved! Dependent, in our first estate, upon those communications of God's grace whereby his image should be maintained in a fallible soul which had been created in his likeness, and had not yet lost it; how much more are we dependent on him now, in order that we may know with certainty what is true and what is good, and may embrace them both with fervour and constancy! Creatures of an infinite God, we cannot, if we would, extricate ourselves from his infinite dominion. Objects of the love of an infinite Saviour, why should we consummate our ruin, by rejecting him who provides for us an ability in itself divine? It is in him alone that lost men are furnished at once with the ability and the way of eternal life. And the immediate object of this chapter is to point out the supreme relation which his blessed word bears to the support and guidance of that life of God in our souls, which manifests itself in nothing more decisively, than in accepting that word as the only Infallible Rule of all Faith and all Duty; that is, of all Truth and all Good unto salvation. Verily, verily, I say unto you—these are the words of Jesus—he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.[1]

2. Independently of those permanent and regulative principles which we call *laws*, which the human mind, by its very constitution, is constantly impelled to search for and to accept in all things; there could exist no permanent relation between one thing and another—nothing which could be called science; knowledge could never have increased, if indeed it could have existed in any proper sense—and the very idea of duty would disappear. They belong so decisively to the very essence of the whole order of the universe, and enter so fundamentally into the constitution of our

[1] John, v. 24.

own nature, that they are manifested in every thing that exists, and in every act of our lives their existenee is implied, and thought itself is regulated by their irresistible control. These permanent and regulative principles, in one form or other pervading all things, are in the strictest sense—*laws:* nor does it alter the case at all to call them laws of nature—laws of thought—laws of morals—laws of this or that particular science. They are laws whose existence implies, on one side, the existence of him who gave them, and, on the other side, the existence of the subject of them, the object upon which they operate. Our ability to discern, to classify, and to use them, implies the existence of our own rational nature: and our total inability to create, to produce, or to impress a new one upon any subject, or with reference to any existing thing, implies the complete dependence of our own being. In themselves, and in their relations to us as rational and dependent beings, they demonstrate a Creator and Ruler of the universe, distinct from the universe itself. They do this in the most general and absolute manner, altogether beside any question of their own special nature. For, while it is true that the special object and mode of operation of the law, may be a conclusive evidence of the character of him who gave the law; it is the existence of the law itself, that puts beyond dispute the existence of him who gave it. These laws are the product of an intellect, a will, and a power competent to produce them, and the universe, from whose essence and operation they are inseparable. And operating under an unchangeable purpose, for definite, unalterable, and illimitable ends, through all time, upon all existence, throughout a boundless universe: we are not only warranted, but forced, to attribute them to a lawgiver and ruler who is infinite and eternal. The whole universe, all existence upon which these laws operate, is shown by the fact of that operation, to be dependent and created: it is all regulated by those laws—but produced and sustained, not by the laws, but by him who gave them. The moment we conceive of independent and uncreated existence, the idea of law, in the strict sense, regulative of it—disappears: because, otherwise, something is before and above independent and uncreated existence—which is absurd, since whatever is independent and uncreated, is eternal. In like manner, if we could think either the author of law, or the subject of law, out of existence, the idea of law itself neces-

sarily vanishes. If we can be certain that any thing exists in the universe, which we can properly call law, and which we know exists as a permanent, regulative principle in the universe ; then it involves a direct contradiction to deny the existence of the maker of that law—and another contradiction to deny the dependent and, therefore, created existence of the subject of that law. In effect, we cannot construe to ourselves the existence of the universe of which we form a part, or the action of any thing we behold in it, without an infinite lawgiver and Creator resulting on one side, and our own dependence and accountability resulting, on the other side.[1] Such considerations are completely decisive with reference to our own relations to God, whether considered with regard to what we ought to believe concerning him, or to what duty he requires of us. Nor does it affect their conclusiveness in the smallest degree, whether we regard them from the point of view of Natural Religion or that of Revealed Religion—from our stand-point as creatures, or from our stand-point as sinners. It is impossible to deny the existence of permanent and regulative principles, pervading the universe with an intimate, uniform, and irresistible force : but the moment we admit their existence, what follows concerning ourselves is, the absolute certainty that we must seek in the author of those laws for the rule of our own conduct, and find in him the portion of our own souls.

3. The discovery and full understanding by us, of these great laws imposed upon all things by the Infinite Creator and Ruler of them all, is a matter altogether different from the nature and significance of the laws themselves. Their existence and operation, in most things, are completely independent of us—and in all things the utmost extent of our ability, in our highest state of knowledge, is a certain conformity, either instinctive or voluntary, unto them—and thereby a certain use and application of them. The discovery, the comprehension, and the voluntary use of them, are amongst the highest distinctions of our spiritual and rational nature : and yet the slow and irregular progress of these conquests of our highest intelligence, is one of the most decisive proofs of our utter insignificance, when compared with the great lawgiver. There is not a single department of knowledge in which our discoveries can be said, with confidence, to have

[1] Rom., i. 18–24 ; ii. 13–16.

reached the end ; while in most, our course of discovery and use is only fairly begun, nor has our total progress carried us far enough to enable us to say we are even aware of the existence of all. Moreover, how small is the proportion of our race that keeps pace with this slow and irregular progress of the race in knowledge ; how marvellously limited has been the number of those who have either permanently advanced the boundaries of knowledge, or maintained it in the position it had reached ; and how constantly has this small number been indebted for the glory of being benefactors of mankind, to the special providence of God, or the peculiar endowments with which he has distinguished them ! Let it be borne in mind that this whole progress is a progress in *truth*, and towards *truth*, and by means of *truth;* a progress conducting us farther and farther from ignorance and error—and nearer and nearer to the fountain of all truth. No matter how various may be the methods resorted to—or how diverse the subjects to which our enquiries are directed—truth is the one great object of discovery in all—truth is the one great rule of belief in all—truth is the one great relation in all, between us as knowing, and all things as capable of being known. Upon our ability to perceive the true, to comprehend it as manifested, and to use it according to its own glorious nature, every issue of our rational and moral nature depends. Knowledge, culture, power, advancement—each according to its kind, and after its manner—ought to follow the reception of its natural aliment by the soul, as health, and beauty, and strength follow the proper nourishment of the body. And these triumphs of feeble man, as he discovers, and comprehends, and accords with the lawgiver of the universe, ought to increase his dominion over nature—ought to advance his power in all that is good, and great, and useful, and beautiful—ought to secure his high personal development and public freedom and civilization—ought to fit and incite him to higher endeavours for the good of his fellow-men and the glory of God—ought to bless, and purify, and exalt him, both in this life and in the life to come. It is not by denying God and casting him off—that progress is possible : it is by discovering him and being conformed unto him. To be *lawless*, is, to us, not freedom, but perdition—and to the universe it is annihilation.

4. It is when we extricate ourselves from every thing but the

consideration of the moral aspect of our being, that these universal truths apply with the most intense emphasis. It is in the moral relations of truth, that the true becomes the good, and reaches the highest elevation attainable in such a condition as ours. And in what respect do those great regulative principles of universal morality, which the Creator and lawgiver of the universe has established, differ, as to their origin, their perpetuity, and their unalterable nature, from all other laws according to which he has created the universe, and under which he sustains and governs it? That there are such laws of universal morality, we have all the evidence we have that any other laws exist in the universe; and that they are of perpetual force, we have all the evidence we have concerning all other laws of God, which enter fundamentally into the essence of things; and that man as the peculiar subject of these laws is unavoidably obliged to recognize and obey them, we have all the evidence we have that the peculiar subjects of all other laws of God are absolutely bound and controlled by them. But in this case, besides having all the evidence that exists with respect to every other universal law of God—and all the means of ascertaining what these laws are, that exist with reference to the rest; there are other sources of evidence concerning the existence, the nature, and the obligation of these, altogether peculiar to them, and altogether overwhelming. In the first place, God in the very creation of man, wrote these laws in his nature so ineffaceably, that the ruin of the race by the fall did not wholly efface them. In the second place, the very object of the Covenant of Works was to exalt man into a condition in which the whole race, by a covenanted right, should live in the perpetual security, felicity, and purity of a perfect conformity to these laws. In the third place, the existence of these laws is a fact of positive and repeated revelation by God to man—a summary of them, as written in man's nature when he was created, was afterwards spoken by God, and written on tables of stone by his own finger, and made the basis of his written revelation of his will—and the whole way of life whereby it was ever possible for man to have peace with God always involved them as the rule of it. In the fourth place, God has endowed man with a conscience accusing or else excusing him, with reference exclusively to his moral conduct and nature—and in connection with the state and operations of this moral faculty, the

relations of every human being towards God are determined—and are felt by every one to be so both really and righteously. In the fifth place, the work of New Creation in man by the Spirit of God, has direct relation to the Moral Law—and the renewed soul has no characteristic more decisive of its increased conformity to God, than the restoration to it, through divine grace, of conformity to his moral image.[1] If then, upon the evidences which are common to all the laws of God, and under which no one is capable of disallowing any of the rest—we are forced to allow the existence of his Moral Law, which is his transcendent law—and to admit our unavoidable subjection to it: how incalculable, may I not add how sublime, does the certainty of it and the glory of it become, when we consider those proofs and manifestations of it, which are peculiarly its own! Thou hast magnified thy word—says David—above all thy name![2] Surely such renown was never put on any thing besides—that the Son of God should die upon the cross, to magnify it and make it honourable![3]

5. The supremacy of the moral sense in fallen man, and the supremacy of the moral law in the universe, constitute that fearful problem of a guilty race hastening to deserved perdition—manifesting its sense of its guilt by every invention through which it seeks to propitiate God, and yet continually heaping up for itself wrath against the day of wrath. It is God who has found a way to solve this problem, in such a manner as to secure at once the highest glory of his name, and the highest blessedness of his fallen creatures. Not by changing, in the slightest degree, the nature of his righteous law, or reducing in the smallest particular its claims upon us, and its dominion over us. Not, on the other hand, by mitigating in the least the enormity of our guilt, or reversing the just judgment of our conscience against ourselves. But by bringing in and working out for us, through the incarnation, obedience, and sacrifice of his only begotten Son, an infinite and everlasting righteousness—transcending all that his law demanded of us; and by restoring us through his Spirit, by a new and heavenly birth, to a higher participation of him than we possessed before our fall. It is we that are changed in our nature and in our estate: God has not changed—the supremacy of conscience abides, the supremacy of the moral law abides; but

[1] Gen., i. 27; ii. 8–17; Exod., xx.; Rom., ii. 11–16; Eph., iv. 17–32.
[2] Psalm cxxxviii. 2. [3] Isaiah, xlii. 21.

it is conscience enlightened and purified by the Spirit and word of God—it is the law satisfied by the obedience and sacrifice of Christ, whose righteousness is both imputed to us and wrought in us—it is the supreme triumph of infinite rectitude and grace combined.

6. In all this, two things are pre-eminent : our restoration to the moral image of God as the matter of our salvation, and the work of redemption by Jesus Christ as the method of it. In both, the existence, the perfection, the supremacy of the moral law are fundamentally involved, and the moral perfections of God are those which are conspicuously exhibited. The form, therefore, in which universal morality has been always binding upon our fallen race, had direct relation to the Son of God as the Saviour of the world ; the supremacy of that law, independently of him, necessarily involved the destruction of the transgressor, and the supremacy of conscience availed only as the testimony of our soul to the righteousness of our condemnation. In like manner, the only form in which conformity to the moral law was ever possible to fallen man, and the purity and felicity which attend upon obedience to it were ever attainable by any transgressor, was through our union with him who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.[1] The keeping of the commandments of God, the New Creature, and that faith which works by love, have always been inseparable :[2] and the righteousness which is of God, by faith in Jesus Christ, is the only righteousness attainable by fallen man, which is compatible with wisdom, sanctification, and redemption.[3] If, therefore, the knowledge of what is at once unchangeably true and unalterably good, and the practice of what is at once universally right, obligatory, and blessed, be any part, much less the sum, of that universal morality of which God is at once the fountain and the lawgiver ; then it is inconceivable that dependent creatures, who are also fallen and depraved sinners, can adequately know or adequately do what is required in order to their acceptance with God ; unless they be furnished by God himself with an infallible rule of all truth and all duty needful for their salvation, and unless they be provided by God himself with light and power adequate to the discovery, the comprehension, and the use of

[1] Rom., iv. 25. [2] 1 Cor., vii. 19; Gal., v. 6; vi. 15.
[3] Phil., iii. 9; 1 Cor., i. 30; 2 Cor., v. 21.

that divine rule of truth and duty. And from the first promise of the Saviour of the world, through the whole life of the human race, this has been the need of man, and the supply of that need the course of divine grace. Instead of obscuring these simple and august truths, it magnifies and exalts them, that the cost at which they have been practically wrought out has been so amazing—that the divine perfections have been so illustrated, and the divine glory so augmented by the display of those perfections to the universe—and that the redemption, the purification, and the everlasting glory and blessedness of lost sinners have been the fruits of God's sovereign grace!

7. In the treatise on the Knowledge of God, Objectively Considered, I have devoted one Book to the consideration of the sources of our Knowledge of God, and to what was designed to be an exhaustive statement of the manifestations which he makes of himself to man. Except as God manifests himself to man, he is not a subject of human knowledge: in whatever manner he does manifest himself to man, we are under the highest obligations to use all diligence that we may apprehend him, and become conformable unto him as known. Supposing him to be known—and I think I have proved that he may be known with infallible certainty unto salvation—then, as I have also proved, his will made known to us considered simply as he is our God and we are his creatures, and still more his will concerning us considered as he is our Saviour and we are his sinful creatures—becomes an absolute and infallible rule of all duty to us, as the knowledge derived from him, through the manifestations he makes of himself to us, is supreme and infallible truth. In God himself, therefore, the sum of all truth and all goodness, and the fountain of both to all creatures, we his sinful creatures are to seek, and may find, an infallible rule concerning all that man ought to believe concerning him, and also concerning all duty required by him of man. It is easy to be understood that the very multiplicity of the ways in which the Knowledge of God is attainable by man, may be abused by us in our blindness, our ignorance, our inattention, and our depravity, to our own confusion and perplexity—setting one manifestation of God against another, confronting one exhibition of his nature and will against another, arraying one record of eternal truth against another. It is easy to understand how this should be done with design, through

the wickedness of man, and how it should be done through ignorance and mistake even with the design of honouring God ; and the history of all human conduct, belief, and speculation, is crowded with examples in both kinds. That we may go astray even when we profess to take God for our teacher, need not be denied ; but that we need not do so in the matter of salvation, seeing how God has taught us, is equally sure. What we practically need is the reduction into a form—divinely certain and divinely authoritative—of this knowledge of God concerning the true and the good, unto our own salvation ; a rule in this sense, whereby we may assuredly believe according to the infallible teaching of God, assuredly live according to the infinitely righteous and omnipotent will of God ; and so believing and living, may have peace with our own conscience and with God, and may obtain everlasting life. Thanks to the infinite faithfulness and condescension of God, we have such a form, such a rule, of truth and duty !

8. Supposing the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be what they purport to be—they contain a divine revelation, and are themselves a divine revelation, of all that man needs to know, and all that man needs to be and do, in order to escape punishment for his sins, obtain the favour of God, and inherit everlasting blessedness.[1] That these divine records are what they claim to be, has been accepted as unquestionable by every righteous man who ever came to the knowledge of them, from the first uttering of them to the present moment. That they are so, I have incidentally advanced, throughout this Treatise and the one preceding it, many considerations which seemed to me conclusive—and I purpose, in another place, to condense the proof into a formal statement. In them, therefore, is that absolute truth unto salvation, besides which no truth unto salvation exists —and that absolute and unchangeable morality, besides which God requires of man no moral act. In them, the will of God concerning fallen men in the matter of salvation, is revealed to our faith with absolute certainty, infallible truth, and divine authority. Whatever knowledge of God is attainable by man through all other manifestations of himself to man, so far as any of it is indispensable to salvation, is reiterated in these inspired writings : and creation, and providence, and the human soul,

[1] Isaiah, viii. 20 ; 2 Tim., iii., 15, 16 ; 2 Pet., i. 19, 20.

nay, even the Word made Flesh, and the author of the New Creation—which I have proved are, besides the inspired word, the remaining manifestations of God, are therein fully explicated by God, with reference to the matter of our faith, our duty, and our salvation. This is the aspect in which the question of a perfect rule of faith and obedience—in other words the question of truth and goodness—of knowledge and of moral duty—presents itself, under the Gospel Church State, to a race of fallen men, of whom the grand necessities are declared to be, Repentance toward God, and Faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ.[1] This is the aspect in which that same supreme question is presented to penitent and believing sinners, followers of the Son of God, to whom the constant exhortation is, Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.[2] It seems to me impossible to doubt, that under the principles discussed and the facts proved, the result is demonstrated. There are laws pervading the universe—amongst the rest moral laws: these laws imply God the lawgiver and man the self-conscious subject of them: these laws are the infallible and unalterable rule of all moral conduct—and all transgressors must perish under them: but if all men—being fallen—are transgressors, and God in infinite mercy reveals a Saviour to them—and therewith restates his Moral Law, and makes plain its relation to the great salvation, and to Faith in the divine Saviour: then that permanent revelation becomes the perfect rule, at once of Faith and of Obedience to fallen men: it is the exclusive and infallible guide in all divine truth and all morality, unto salvation. What makes the point demonstrated as efficacious as it is clear and precise, is that these same Scriptures reveal to us a divine interpreter of their sense, a divine enforcer of their power, a divine agent in their effectual and saving application to our souls, a divine witness to their truth and to the blessedness they not only reveal, but convey. Impregnable in their outward evidences, irresistible in their inward evidences—we pass to a still higher domain of certainty and conviction, when through the Spirit of God abiding in the renewed soul, the truth of God becomes the very life of it, through the unction, the demonstration and the power of the Holy Ghost.[3]

II.—1. These blessed Scriptures, thus shown to be the Infal-

[1] Acts, xx. 21. [2] 1 Peter, iii. 18.

[3] Ezek., xxxvi. 26, 27; Rom., viii. 9–17; John, xiv. 15–27.

lible Rule of our Faith and Obedience, teach us with great clearness that being the dependent and fallen creatures of an infinitely good, wise, powerful, holy, just and true God—our Creator, benefactor, lawgiver, redeemer, and judge, the chief end of our existence is, to glorify him and to enjoy him for ever.[1] That he will glorify himself, one how or other, by us and by all the works of his hands, he has told us plainly—nor can any one imagine any other result to be possible.[2] But there is an amazing difference between being made through our sins monuments of the infinite justice of God, to the praise of his glory ; and, on the other hand, illustrating the riches of his glory as vessels of mercy, by such lives as become penitent and believing followers of his only begotten Son.[3] Nor is it a light thing to note, that the enjoyment of God by us is indissolubly united with that service of him and that conformity to him, whereby his glory is illustrated and promoted. The knowledge, therefore, which we need in order to accomplish the chief end of our existence by glorifying and enjoying God ; is summarily comprehended in knowing what is true concerning God, and in knowing what his will is concerning us. It is this which the Scriptures principally teach —their very sum being, what man ought to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.[4] That we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God, and are sunk into blindness and ignorance of divine things, and are naturally depraved and averse to what is spiritually true and good, and are under the dominion of divers lusts and many evil passions ; are but terrible facts, making more clearly manifest our need of such a light and such a power, as God has provided for us in his blessed word. However miserable our estate and our way may be—here is a lamp unto our feet, a light upon our path, the man of our secret counsel : and it is a true saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ, whom those Scriptures reveal, came into the world to save sinners—even the chief. Nor does the helpless guilt into which we are plunged—disabling us in our own strength, either to accept the divine teachings which would make us wise unto salvation, or to reap that great reward which attends the keeping of the divine commandments ; shut us out from the hope of glorifying and enjoying God, except as we reject

[1] Rom., xi. 36 ; 1 Cor., x. 31 ; Ps. lxxiii. 20–26 ; John, xvii. 22–24.
[2] Prov., xvi. 4. [3] Rom , ix. 22, 23. [4] John, xx. 31 ; 2 Tim., i. 13 ; Ps. cxix. 105.

him who is the end of the law itself for righteousness, and who is the way, the truth, and the life.[1] It is he alone who has glorified God by a perfect obedience: it is he alone who is the truth: it is in him alone that the true and the good are made available to us. As long as his words remain, All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out;[2] every true disciple of his should be ashamed of his unworthy doubts and fears, and every humble seeker of him should blush at his unbelief.

2. Considering the Scriptures as the perpetual and infallible rule, in general, of what all men ought to believe concerning God, and in particular, as a similar rule of the faith of all Christians; the light in which they present themselves would seem to be too clear to allow the possibility of doubt—if the world had not been filled with dishonouring allegations of their insufficiency for such a purpose. I omit to say any thing here, of the ability of God to make himself intelligible to man: I omit all proof that he himself exhorts and commands us to accept and believe his word, as a way of life perfectly clear and sure: I omit any use of the overwhelming demonstration, that from the beginning of time this way of life has been accepted and understood in exactly the same sense, as to every thing these Scriptures declare to be essential to salvation, by every human being who, there is any reason to believe, was ever saved.[3] What supersedes, in this place, the necessity of urging any other consideration—is the subject-matter itself, viewed as an object of human knowledge. The teachings of the Scriptures, touching faith and touching morals, are widely distinct in their essential nature. The Moral Law, as has been shown, was written on the soul of man at his creation: the sacred writings, as has been shown, do not change this law—they restate it, enforce its obligation by adding the express to the natural authority of God, and explain its relations to the plan of salvation—the relations of morality to grace. But the grace—the faith—the salvation with which the word of God is replenished—every thing that makes it a Gospel—the power of God unto salvation: none of them were written on the soul of man at his creation—none of them were embraced even in the Covenant of Woeks. All—absolutely all—are matters of pure Revelation. Touching the whole Plan of Salvation by Jesus

[1] Rom., x. 10; John, xiv. 6. [2] John, vi. 37. [3] 2 Tim., iii. 14–17.

Christ—touching all that is known concerning God by means of the Revelation of this plan—touching the entire relations of salvation by grace to the moral law, as well as to every thing else in the universe ; all the knowledge that man ever possessed, is revealed knowledge—and is contained in the sacred Scriptures. It is all knowledge which transcends human knowledge ; God alone possessed it—he alone could reveal it. Of two things, therefore, one is unavoidable. Either the whole of what purports to be a divine Revelation of a new and living way, whereby life and immortality are brought to light through the word of God, and all the pretended knowledge of God and of salvation connected therewith, is one vast and absolute imposture ; or, being true, real, and divine, it is itself the absolute and infallible rule of belief in all that it reveals, and all men, in general, must accept it as such, and Christians, in particular, must receive it as the sole ground and rule of Faith unto salvation. It is true there is an infallible interpreter of it : but he is the Holy Ghost, who is the author of it all. It is true, each rational being, using his best endeavours, and seeking the promised divine assistance, must determine, for himself, the sense of the word. But this he would have to do, if God spoke to him face to face ; this, he will be obliged to do concerning the final sentence which will be passed on him ; this, he cannot avoid, without abnegating his rational and moral nature—and staking eternal life on a creature like himself, rather than on the God who created him, the Saviour who redeemed him, and the Spirit who sanctifies him.

3. When we reflect that the very possibility of religion depends on the existence of our personal intelligence and accountability, and consider that truth is the natural aliment of the human understanding, and that the pursuit, the acquisition, and the enjoyment of it, are the fittest occupation and chief glory of our nature ; how greatly should we magnify the name of God, for that he has opened to us the very fountain of eternal truth, and revealed it to us in himself, so that there—precisely where we were most in darkness, and where it most behooved us to get knowledge, the soul is delivered from its bondage, and God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. That we have this treasure in earthen vessels, only makes it the more evident that the excellency of the

power is of God, and not of us. This manifestation of the truth ought to commend itself to every man's conscience, in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into them.[1] To believe any thing that is not true upon any subject whatever, is always a manifold evil to us, and is always a proof of the weakness of our fallen nature. But to believe what is false concerning God himself, who is the sum of all truth, is an evil the whole extent of which we do not state, when we say that in this way the very end of our being, in glorifying and enjoying him, is most thoroughly frustrated.[2] On the other hand, This, says the Redeemer, is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.[3] These Scriptures, therefore, the repository of that saving knowledge, and the record of that eternal life to which it conducts us, are the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.[4] And concerning their efficacy in making us wise unto salvation, he who judged himself to have been the chief of sinners, and whom God has made one of the most illustrious channels of conveying divine knowledge to man, declares that the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.[5] They who, in the greatness of their gifts and their attainments, perceive the most clearly those boundaries within which human knowledge is circumscribed, are the readiest to acknowledge our need of the revelation which God has given us concerning divine things: and they who have searched the deepest into this exhaustless store of divine knowledge and wisdom, are the last to claim that without it they could have found the way of life, or that without it they can now walk in the way it has disclosed. What marvel is there that the Christian loves his Bible with a fervour, which not even an enthusiast in his devotion to any other truth can comprehend? Has it not made God, of whom he had some dim conceptions before, perfectly known to him, as the fountain of all truth, all goodness, all glory, all blessedness, and

[1] 2 Cor., iv. 2–7. [2] Psalm L. 21, 22; Prov., xiv. 12; xvi. 25.
[3] John, xvii. 3. [4] John, v. 39; Rom., i. 16. [5] Heb., iv. 12.

as such his God in Christ? Has it not made Christ, of whom, independently of revelation, he knew nothing, and in whom at first he saw no beauty that he should desire him, perfectly known to him as the Saviour of his soul, and his satisfying and eternal portion? Has it not taught him truths so high, so precious, so full, so certain, so wonderful, that all things are become new, and that in their mighty working in him by the power of the Holy Ghost, he also himself has become a new creature? Has it not been unto him as the sword of the Spirit, by which mighty victories have been won in him, and won through him, and by which mighty victories are still to be won—conquering and to conquer? Surely there is no marvel in such confidence and love: but there is wondrous proof therein. Whether this divine word be the infallible teacher as to what we ought to believe and do, let the countless millions of redeemed souls attest, whose faith and new obedience it was the instrument to beget, the means to nourish, and the rule to direct. And then let the universe be searched for a single soul, that knows the true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, irrespective of the divine truth herein revealed; or whose faith and life, guided by any other rule, availed to save him from the wrath to come.

4. It is not possible to conceive of any thing as good, irrespective of its nature as true also; so that evangelical righteousness has its root in revealed truth, no less really than universal morality has its root in truth cognizable to man as he was created. The performance of duty cannot precede knowledge—knowledge cannot precede truth—obedience cannot exist independently of belief. Without holiness no man shall see God:[1] but yet it is after God that the new man is created in the holiness of truth:[2] and, therefore, it is through the righteousness of faith that sinners are saved, and become heirs of all the promises:[3] and that is a righteousness which is itself revealed, from faith to faith.[4] Not only, therefore, are the Scriptures the rule of all belief touching divine things, as has been proved; but, explicitly, both from the nature of the case and from their own express statements, the truth they reveal, and the faith they require, underlie the whole of that New Obedience they exact, and are the foundation of it. In the perfect state of man, to say, do and

[1] Heb., xii. 14.
[2] Eph., iv. 24; ii. 10.
[3] Rom., iii. 22; iv. 13.
[4] Rom., i. 17.

live, might bring eternal life within reach of him who already knew God. But to man, fallen and ignorant of God, no other way of life is possible, except that the just shall live by faith.[1] The distinction involves the whole difference between the Covenant of Grace, on one side, and the Covenant of Works and the primeval state of man, on the other. To the sinner, obedience to God neither is, nor can be, the ground of his interest in God: it is the fruit and evidence of that interest.[2] I am the Lord thy God,[3] are the words with which God prefaces the Moral Law, which is the rule of all obedience: it is because God is the Lord, and our God and Redeemer, that we are bound to keep all his commandments. The part of sinners is to accept the Saviour sent of God, and the eternal life revealed in him; and then the obedience which is of faith—embracing every commandment of God, is to be accomplished throughout their whole life of faith, repentance, the new obedience, good works, and the spiritual warfare. Faith, so far from making the law void, establishes it.[4] For it is Christ Jesus our Saviour, who alone has perfectly kept the law—it is the Holy Ghost our Comforter and Sanctifier, who inspired it all, and it is the new creature alone who is conformed to it. The connection between the true Knowledge of God and true obedience to his holy law, between the faith and the duty, of both of which the Scriptures are the perfect rule—is in its very nature such as to make the true obedience—the duty—wholly impossible irrespective of the true knowledge—the faith. Greatly, therefore, as we err if we imagine true religion to be possible, independently of the strict observance of all morality; the error is not less grievous, to suppose that any obedience to the moral law, which will avail in the sight of God, is possible to us, independently of that knowledge of him which is revealed in Christ Jesus. In effect, it is the Scriptures alone which teach us this—and through them, both ways, we are complete in him who is the head of all principality and power.[5] By union and communion with him, we are made partakers of the riches of the revealed grace of God, in the knowledge of his adorable name, and the holiness of his blessed law. It is thus that the riches of Christ are indeed unsearchable.[6]

[1] Gal., iii. 8–14.
[2] 1 John, ii. 3–5.
[3] Exod., xx. 2.
[4] Rom., iii. 31.
[5] Col., ii. 10.
[6] Eph., ii. 8–12; i. 3–12; Col., i. 24–28.

5. Manifestly, where no law is, there is no transgression.[1] Manifestly again, whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.[2] And yet once more, manifestly, all unrighteousness is sin.[3] These propositions, each one of which is precisely asserted by God, and clear to human reason and conscience, are decisive of the whole subject. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.[4] But whether we be considered as the creatures of God, or as sinners redeemed by the blood of Christ, it is mockery of God to suppose we can enjoy his favour while we lie under the curse of his law; and it is mockery of us to say we can have any fruition of him while our nature revolts at that which he requires of us, and is prone only to that which is forbidden by him. Always, therefore, and under all possible estates, the law of God is the rule of life and death, the rule of sin and holiness, the rule of happiness and misery unto us. It avails nothing to say we are fallen and cannot keep the law: that only renders more obvious our necessity for union with Christ, who did perfectly keep it on our behalf. It avails nothing to urge that being united to Christ, it is the righteousness of faith whereby we are saved: for the New Creature, who alone can exercise faith in Christ, has the law of God written anew on his heart, and loves that law and abhors himself for every transgression of it, and every want of conformity unto it, exactly in proportion to his growth in grace. The restoration by revelation from heaven of the knowledge of that law effaced in man by the fall, was an act of God, with reference to the law, responsive to his act restoring man to the lost image of himself. Both acts appertain to the Covenant of Grace—both have direct relation to true religion and the salvation of the soul—and the impiety is no greater to deny the new birth, than to assert that the new birth is irrespective of our moral nature and obligations. Now it is in the divine word that all these truths are made known unto us —this divine restoration of man, this divine restatement of the moral law, these divine relations between the one and the other wonderful work of God: and in it they are so made known, that, in their glorious fulness, they become the Gospel of Christ—which is the power of God unto salvation. There only is a divine Saviour made known to us, in whose incarnation, obedience, and sacrifice, a divine righteousness is attainable by us, through which

[1] Rom., iv. 15. [2] 1 John, iii. 4. [3] 1 John, v. 17. [4] Heb., xii. 14.

our imperfect obedience is acceptable to God; there only is a divine agent revealed to us, by whom a righteousness fitting us for the service and enjoyment of God is wrought in us, these very Scriptures being, as has been proved, the instrument of the sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost. If, therefore, any reliance is to be placed on the express declarations of these sacred writings—or on the knowledge they impart to us concerning God, and man, and the relations between them; then there is no room to doubt that the invariable judgment and experience of all souls truly enlightened in divine things are just, and that herein is delivered to us infallibly, the sum as well as the rule both of obedience and faith. It may be added with confidence, that the clear acceptation of the divine truths revealed to our faith, and the living conformity to the duties divinely required of us, are the very measure of the power of the divine life within us.

6. I have spoken with particular reference to the moral law—and more generally of the whole will of God no matter how we may come to the knowledge of it—and very specially of the written revelation of the divine will, as containing all that God requires man to believe concerning him, and the whole duty that God requires of man. Those positive commands and ordinations of God which he has at any time made known to man, and those intimations of his will through his infinite providence, which continually attend the progress of our whole race and that of every individual of it, and that working of his divine Spirit in the souls of men, which is so specially the life of all God's children and so universally the scoff of every form of unbelief: all these will be found to have the most intimate relations with each other, and a perpetual relevancy to that unalterable faith and morality, the claims of which and the rule of which I have been urging. This renders it needless, at this time, to enter upon the discussion of topics so numerous and so great, whose special exposition belongs to the regular ministrations of the pulpit, and to treatises whose form and object are different from the present one. I have shown in a previous Treatise, that the institution of the Sabbath day was coeval with the creation of man; and that the consecration by God of man, to his special service and enjoyment, and the consecration of the seventh day with special reference thereto, were the primeval acts of God's sovereign goodness in the way of dominion over the exalted being he had just created in his own

image.[1] When, so many ages afterwards, God spoke and recorded with his own finger on tables of stone, the law which he had first written on man's heart; it is not strange that he placed in the midst thereof that law of a blessed Sabbath, which was from the beginning of time and of human existence, independently of which in some form man had never known any moral law, nor had any idea of his own consecration to his Creator. Nor is there the least cause of surprise, when we consider these things, that the Lord Jesus should have made his exercise of lordship over the Sabbath day, one of the crushing proofs of his own divine authority; and that he should have taught with so much emphasis that in its very nature and existence it had, like the law written on the heart, relation to the very being and blessedness of man.[2] With that restoration of the moral law by God, moreover, commenced the written revelation of his will—and every word he has caused to be revealed and written since, stands in indissoluble connection with it. It lay at the basis of the ceremonial, political, and Levitical, as well as religious system erected by Moses at the command of God: and the Gospel Church founded on the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, is so far from being independent of this unalterable rule of right, that every member of it is created in Christ Jesus unto Good Works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.[3] Nor is the New Birth itself more inscrutable to us, than is the power of God in creation by which the law written in man's heart should be reproduced in us through endless generations, just as it stood in the first fallen man; nay, reproduced with the record also of its primeval violation, in the same terror of God's presence in every child of Adam, which Adam himself felt as soon as he had fallen;[4] a terror from which nothing can deliver us but faith on the Son of God.[5] In every direction all these sublime truths illustrate and fortify each other: and each one of these great topics may be taken in succession, and made the centre from which all the rest may be displayed. In itself, not one is more distinct than this of God's unalterable moral law; and however the exact nature of particular duties may sometimes perplex us, nothing can be more certain than the nature of duty itself—nothing more assured

[1] Gen., i. 28; ii. 3. [2] Matt., xii. 1–8; Mark, ii. 23–28. [3] Eph., ii. 10–22.
[4] Gen., iii. 10; 1 John, iii. 20, 21. [5] Rom., v. 1, 2.

than its infallible sum and rule. A law emanating from God himself—written on every human heart by nature—restored by the finger of God—incorporated with all revealed religion—illustrated throughout the whole sacred Scriptures—perfectly fulfilled and complete satisfaction made to it by the divine Redeemer in our room and stead: we are born again by his Word and Spirit into the lost image of God and a new conformity to his holy law—the love of that blessed law the very fruit of our new life as we increase in conformity to God, and in fitness for his service and enjoyment! Well may God's prophet declare, He hath showed thee O man what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?[1] Well may the inspired preacher proclaim the conclusion of the whole matter to be, that we should, Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.[2] It is Jesus who crowns all: I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me: all that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.[3]

7. Thus connecting all duty with all faith—thus uniting all the good with all the true—thus laying in the very nature of man an original ability, and in his fallen state a susceptibility of restoration, to the service and enjoyment of God—thus founding in God himself, the author and first cause of all things, the root, and course, and end of all the mysteries of nature and of grace—thus accepting the Son of God as the Saviour of the world, in whom all these mysteries are solved, and all things are recapitulated and redressed: we turn to the written word of God, the repository of all these sublime truths, and confessing it to be the infallible source of knowledge, whereby we may be enabled to glorify God and enjoy him for ever, which is the chief end of our existence—we seek in these Scriptures, in order to that end, specifically what we ought to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of us. They give us, specifically, that knowledge—line upon line, precept upon precept: they give it with divine authority as to the matter, and with divine certainty as to the form: through them, we receive, by the Spirit of God, a divine illumination wherein a true insight of them is attainable—a divine regeneration and sanctification wherein a continually in-

[1] Micah, vi. 8. [2] Eccles., xii. 13. [3] John xiv. 6; vi. 37.

creasing conformity unto them is attainable : and as the foundation, at once, and consummation of all, we receive the Saviour of our souls, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.[1] Touching all duty, he has himself laid down the universal and unalterable rule, Observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.[2] And thus all that has been written of him, was in order that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God : and that believing we might have life through his name.[3] And thus repentance and remission of sins have been preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.[4] So that beyond all doubt, if there be no other name under heaven, given amongst men, whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus ; there can be no other rule of salvation given under heaven amongst men, but that which Jesus gives us ; and there can be no other infallible assurance that we possess either the Saviour, the salvation, or the rule, except that which is grounded in the word inspired, and the work wrought in us, by the Spirit of Jesus.

8. If we would know with certainty that the things commanded by Jesus touching all duty, are the very things embraced in that unalterable law of God which he himself perfectly fulfilled, and under which he shed his most precious blood to redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works ; we have but to hearken to his own emphatic words, Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets : I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.[5] As restated by God, the first four commandments, composing the first table of the law, comprise a summary of man's duty to God, and the last six commandments, composing the second table of the law, comprise a summary of man's duty to his fellow-man.[6] That we shall accept the true God and renounce every other God : that we shall avoid all idolatry even in the worship of the true God : that we shall avoid all irreverence towards God : that we shall devote six days to the diligent pursuit of our lawful business, and keep the seventh day as a Sabbath consecrated to God : this, a human interpreter would give as the general sense of that

[1] 1 Cor., i. 30. [2] Matt., xxviii. 20. [3] John, xx. 31.
[4] Luke, xxiv. 47. [5] Matt., v. 17, 18. [6] Exod., xx.

first table, which our Lord sums up in the one sentence, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind.[1] That we shall honour our parents, that we shall not kill, that we shall respect the property of others, that we shall preserve our own and their chastity, that we shall adhere to the truth, and that we shall be content with our lot: this is what, according to human thinking, would be the general sum of the second table, whose sum our Lord teaches us is, That we should love our neighbour as ourselves, and that All things whatsoever we would that men should do unto us, we should do even so to them.[2] The republication of this universal law was in the form of a covenant, entered into at Mount Sinai, between God and his people;[3] wherein was recognized the Covenant of Redemption, and the moral law as the law of Christ, and a rule of life to his seed;[4] and wherein was recognized, also, the binding obligation of the penalty of the Covenant of Works, to be inflicted on the wicked in the great day, and to be borne by Christ for his people.[5] Let us remember, also, that God has declared this law to be perfect, to be spiritual, and to be exceeding broad:[6] and then we shall easily realize the propriety of those perpetual expositions of its irresistible penetration and force, its illimitable depth and completeness, its all-pervading compass and energy, its divine rectitude and majesty, which pervade the sacred Scriptures. And when we consider the relations of this law to God, to the nature of man, to the Covenant of Grace, to the Mediator of that Covenant, and to salvation as wrought out by Christ, and explained in the Scriptures, and actually and triumphantly applied to fallen man; the exposition of its sum as being love to God and love to our fellow-men—the love of a renewed soul—the love by which faith works—so far from being an exaggeration, is perceived as soon as Christ utters it, to be the unavoidable consummation of the sublime argument involved in the sublime data.[7]

9. It is impossible to address ourselves to any particular man-

[1] Luke, x. 27; Deut., vi. 5.
[2] Matt., xxii. 39; vii. 12.
[3] Deut., v. 2; Exod., xxxiv. 28; Deut., ix. 9.
[4] Rom., vii. 4; Gal., iii. 16, 17.
[5] Psalm lxix. 4; Deut., v. 22, 26; Heb., xii. 21.
[6] Psalm xix. 7; Rom., vii. 14; Psalm cxix. 96.
[7] Rom., xiii. 10; Gal., v. 6; Deut., xxx. 6; Rom., xii. 9; Isa., xxvi. 8, 9; Matt., x. 37, 38; Psalm lxxiii. 24–26.

ner of analysing the law of God, considered in itself and in the great relations of it which have been suggested, and to accomplish this in a manner as exhaustive as our faculties allow; without continually arriving, by one process after another, at those clear and grand results, which Christ has declared to us, and which I have endeavoured to state and estimate. Thus, if we consider the law under its successive aspects of preceptive on the one side, and penal on the other; it is only as Christ, in our nature and in our stead, has perfectly kept every precept of it, that we in him can be considered and treated as if we had kept those precepts; and only as he, in our nature and in our stead, has paid its penalty and endured its curse, that we in him can escape the wrath to come. While all this involves the whole mediatorial office and work of Christ, and our union and communion with him; it involves, at the same time, the complete recognition of the law as being the holy, just, and unalterable law of God; it involves the complete recognition of the sacred Scriptures as the repository of that law and as the infallible rule both of our faith in Christ and our obedience to the law: and it involves the complete recognition of the infinite righteousness and grace of God, as the giver both of the law and the Saviour. The result is still the same if we endeavour so to analyze the law, as to consider separately, what duty it requires of us towards God, what towards ourselves, and what towards others; and then, passing farther, consider under the last of these three divisions, the multiplied subdivisions which the order and progress of nature and society beget—the relative duties of parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants, children of the same family, citizens of the same commonwealth—nay even members of the same fallen race. Passing by all but the last and most universal relation—how immeasurable in its influence upon that, is the idea of a divine Redeemer for lost men, when added to the idea of a divine law for them, which he comes, in their common nature, to obey, to satisfy, and magnify for them! Taken as a race, under the law, with and without the idea of their brotherhood in Christ Jesus, with and without a common Saviour and a common salvation—how immeasurably different in the two cases, is their condition and their destiny! We must never permit ourselves to forget that lawlessness, everywhere and in every estate, signifies ruin, to every

dependent creature: and that law means death as well as life—life and death being the only alternatives that are possible, when God, and man, and a moral law, are the elements from which a conclusion must flow. Under the law, we are already lost sinners. To alter, to abolish, to evade, or to keep the law—are all impossible. A Saviour is the sole remedy—the sole alternative against perdition. Therefore it is, that Faith, Repentance, New Obedience, Good Works, Spiritual Warfare—have such immense significance—and the Infallible Rule of them all such boundless importance.

10. Such is the relation of the sacred Scriptures to the human race, and more especially to the Messianic Kingdom, from the point of view occupied in the present inquiry. The truth contained in them is the only truth whereby we can be made wise unto salvation—the duties revealed in them are the only duties which a soul thus made wise admits—the Saviour who is their centre and sum is the only Mediator between God and man, the only Redeemer of God's Elect. They are, therefore, the revealed, the unalterable, and the universal Rule of Faith, and of Morality; and in them, being divinely taught what we ought to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of us, we are plainly, powerfully, and completely guided by the Holy Ghost to the chief end of our existence, in glorifying God and enjoying him for ever.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD,

SUBJECTIVELY CONSIDERED.

ARGUMENT OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

What may be called the purely individual and personal aspect of the Religion of God, in its influence upon the soul and life of each particular Christian, was concluded in the preeeding Book. The fundamental eonditions of what may be called the purely social and organic effects of that Religion, with regard to those whose separate experience has been traeed to the end, are disclosed in this Fourth Book. Our relations are direct with the Lord Jesus, in our Union and Communion with him; they are also direct with all our brethren in Christ, in the sense that all of them have communion with each other, by reason of their mutual union with Christ. That union with Christ, is the immediate basis of grace and salvation, personally considered: communion with each other, the immediate basis of organized Christianity—the Chureh.—Christ is equally the head, supreme and exclusive, of every particular Christian having communion with him; and of every organie union of Christians, having eommunion with eaeh other, in consequence of the previous union of all of them with him; and this is equally true, in every conceivable state of the developement of this Christian brotherhood. The extent to which these truths are used in producing an organism, is different under different dispensations. The Kingdom of God is exhibited to us in the Seriptures in such a manner as to involve perpetually a threefold aspeet; namely, from its head Christ, it is exhibited as the Kingdom of Messiah—from its author the Holy Spirit, as the New Creation—and from its members the Children of God, as the Body, the Bride, the Fulness, the Church of Christ. It is this last aspect of the Kingdom of God, now militant in its gospel state, which is the direct effeet of those dealings of God with men in the matter of salvation, which is now to be diseussed, in traeing the Subjective Knowledge of God into, and afterwards through, that divine organism. In the Nineteenth Chapter, therefore, which is the First of this Fourth Book, it is shown that the fundamental eonception of the Chureh of Christ, considered as the Kingdom of God, is that it is the body organized of those, whom the Mediator redeems as their Priest, teaches as their Prophet, and rules over as their King; and that the supreme and exelusive Headship of Christ, and the Communion of Saints, are the two elemental principles of the divine Organization thus eonceived; this being a

Peculiar Kingdom, not commensurate with the human race, but created by the Holy Ghost out of those chosen out of all kingdoms, by God's free and sovereign Grace: and the divine procedure, in the gradual and permanent organization of the Visible Church, is traced through all past Dispensations—the effects of every successive act of God are stated—the result reached and the principles yielded to us in the Gospel Church are demonstrated—and the great conception and elemental principles pervading all, are shown to be unchangeable, in all future, as in all past dispensations. The Twentieth Chapter, which is the Second of this Book, is devoted to the disclosure of the Nature and Ends of this Kingdom of God, and the exposition of the means of estimating the one and the other: these means being supremely, the word of God, in its historical, its prophetical, and its ethical teachings, with direct reference to the special matter; in illustration of which, is the actual Church, since the Canon of Scripture closed, historic and present: the nature of this Kingdom being, that it is spiritual, everlasting, and universal—witnessing for God in time, and through eternity: the immediate object of its divine organization being its own Perfection and Extension—therein saving sinners, perfecting saints, illustrating its own nature and end—and the nature of God's Being and Grace: the obligatory force of its divine organism—its own relation to Faith and Duty—and the resources given to it by God, being all complete. The Twenty-first Chapter, which is the Third of this Book, is occupied with an attempt to deduce and to explicate this Kingdom of God, in its intimate Nature and fundamental Principles, considered as the Visible Church of the Lord Jesus Christ: wherein the gracious Interposition of God, and the Probation of the human race, are considered in their actual, their theoretical, and their revealed results; and God's manifold dealings with the human race—responsive to these manifold results, and the concatenation of his Providence and his Grace, are traced to the separate and visible organization of his Kingdom, and the simultaneous visible rejection of the world: the relation between the Nature of Man, the Nature of Society, and the Nature of the Church Visible of Christ, is carefully traced—the fundamental principles common to all are disclosed—the relevancy of all to God, and to each other, is pointed out—the peculiar and divine distinction between the Church and the Body Politic is explicated—and the strict definition of the Church, thus demonstrated, is given. The Twenty-second Chapter, which is the Fourth of this Book, is devoted to the Demonstration of the Freedom of the Church of the living God; which is shown to consist outwardly, in its total separation from the Civil State, and inwardly in its absolute consecration to Christ: to the establishment of the first element of this Freedom, it is shown that the Household, the State, and the Church, are all equally ordained of God—that they alone are ordained of him—that unitedly they exhaust the social susceptibilities of man—that the sphere of each, where all exist, is both naturally and divinely incompatible with that of both the others—that all tendency to the union of the Civil State and the Church, is destructive alike of the freedom of Nations and of the Nature of the Church—and contrary to the Will of God; most especially in that any such union obscures the Visibility of the True Church, by confounding it with the world whose rejection by God, is an elemental part of that Visibility: to the

establishment of the second element of the Freedom of the Church, the relation of the Glorified Redeemer to his Church and that of his Church to him, and her Blessedness in his infinite Dominion over her, are disclosed; and her true inward Freedom, without which she can have no outward Freedom, nor be his Church at all, is shown to result from her union and communion with him, and to be expressed and exercised in her absolute consecration to him, as the true and highest expression of her Spiritual Freedom. The Twenty-Third Chapter, which is the Fifth of this Book, starts from an advanced point in the enquiry; the fundamental Idea of the Church and its elemental Principles—the Nature and End of it—the deduction and solution of its great Problem—and the Spiritual Freedom of it in Christ, having been disclosed, and a fixed and complete conception of it obtained. This Chapter, therefore, proceeds to settle the principles upon which, at the end of so many centuries and vicissitudes, we may practically and infallibly determine the True Church Visible of the Lord Jesus Christ, amongst innumerable religions and sects. It discusses the elements of the Question of the Church, showing that there are three of them, to wit, the Historical, the Logical, the Supernatural—explicating all three, demonstrating their use and relative importance, and the supremacy of the Supernatural element over both the others —and that of the Logical element over the Historical: all possible forms of religion are then reduced to three, which are stated, discussed, and the only true one demonstrated; and then the principles upon which the infallible Marks of the True Church are to be settled, are demonstrated with reference to the only true form that is possible to Religion. The three remaining Chapters are devoted to the discussion of the three divine Marks by which the true, visible, universal Church of God is infallibly determined—one Chapter to each infallible Mark. The Twenty-Fourth Chapter, which is the Sixth of this Book, is occupied with the demonstration that Purity of Faith is the first of those infallible Marks. The causes of the alleged difficulties in ascertaining the True Church, are designated —and the nature and design of the impostures resorted to are disclosed:—the state of the renewed soul—the nature of revealed salvation—and the religion of the True Church, are shown to be absolutely correlates of each other—the fundamental characteristic of the whole being Faith in the divine Mediator, through whom is all Grace: the divine word which reveals the Saviour, the Faith, and the Church—is shown to be the infallible Rule of Faith in that Saviour; and the infallible Arbiter of every Church that can be his—and the question of salvation being settled, no matter how, the questions of the Church—of the Rule of Faith —and of the Judge of Controversies follow, as necessary Corollaries, the nature of the salvation—the whole of which are discussed: the relation of true Faith to all Christian graces is explained—and the saving work of the Holy Ghost is shown to be the vital fact with reference to Faith, and by consequence to the life of God in every believer, and in the Church—which is the Body of Christ: and in the end, the nature and ground of our judgments concerning true Faith and the True Church—the nature and force of the symbolical statements of the True Church—and the hatred of God towards corrupt and apostate churches— are pointed out. The Twenty-Fifth Chapter, which is the Seventh of this Book, is devoted to the explication of the Idea of the true and spiritual Worship of

God, as revealed in the sacred Scriptures; showing that it is elemental and all pervading, in the religion therein revealed to man; the recognition, service, worship of the true God, through the only Mediator, by the divine Spirit, being the very method of the fruition of him—and of the manifestation of his glory, both by his children individually, and by his organized Visible Church, of which it is an Infallible Mark: in the demonstration of which, the relation of the word of God, and the life of God in the soul, to each other, and to the worship of God; the relation of the Plan of Salvation, the work of the Spirit, and the divine Idea and organism of the Church, to each other, and to the Worship of God; the relation of Worship, to Religion, and to God; the relation of the Priesthood, and Sacrifice of Christ, and of his Ascension Gifts, to the Idea of true Worship in the Church of God; the Royal Priesthood of the Peculiar People; and the special, revealed Worship of the Christian Church; are all briefly considered—and closed with a summary demonstration of the infallible certainty of this Mark. The Twenty-Sixth Chapter, which is the Eighth and last of this Book, is devoted to the exposition of Holy Living, as the third Infallible Mark of the True Church: the relation of all righteousness in man to the law of God—and of all gospel holiness to Christ, to Faith, and to the spiritual Worship of God, is disclosed: the reality of Moral Distinctions, and the demonstration they afford of God, and of his nature as the fountain of all Goodness, is pointed out: the neglect and the perversion of these as fatal—the indissoluble connection between Blessedness and Holiness—and the nature of the Holiness which distinguishes the True Church—are explicated, and the unity of that Holiness, with each of the preceding Marks of that Church is proved: then the unity of the Mystery of Godliness is pointed out, and the perfection of Knowledge, of Duty, and of Grace, is shown to coincide with Goodness: the Chapter and the Book close, with an exhibition of the true life of the Church, as the power of the Holy Ghost—of the conclusive effect of the supremacy of the Supernatural Element in the Question of the Church—and of the Majesty and Glory of that Church. This brief synopsis of a somewhat extended attempt to demonstrate, upon the divine word, the precise nature of the Gospel Church, independently of the great Gifts of God to his Church, which will be discussed in the next Book, and which make everything more specific; is itself capable, perhaps, of being reduced to a more condensed, and still intelligible statement of the leading truths. Thus—God has a Visible Church in this World, which is held forth in his regenerate children, organized by him upon the twofold basis, of the Union and Communion of Christ, its only Head, with every member of it—and the communion, through Christ, of all the members with each other: The Means, divine and human, of appreciating the Nature and End of this Visible Church, are complete; and they clearly demonstrate that it is the manifestation, in time, of a Spiritual, Universal, and Eternal Kingdom, whose End is the illustration of the Glory of God, in the salvation of fallen men: This Church, visible, universal, of the Lord Jesus Christ, now militant in its Gospel state as shaped by his inspired Apostles—is deduced through all God's Acts of Providence and Grace touching the salvation of man, from the beginning of time and the creation of man; and is unchangeable in form and substance, until the second Coming of the Son of Man: It possesses

a peculiar divine organization, separate from the world, and not commensurate with the human race;—whose functions, based on principles inherent in human nature, and common to all forms of society; are, in their exercise, limited, bounded, and directed, by the Will of God revealed in the sacred Scriptures—which are its infallible Rule, in all things: By the Will of God, this Church is Free; made Free, inwardly, by the Holy Ghost, its inward Freedom depends upon and is manifested by its consecration to Christ, its only Head; made Free, outwardly, by the command of God, its outward Freedom depends upon its complete organic separation from the world; thus Free, the subject-matter of its mission is—all things whatsoever Christ has commanded—all things that are to be addressed to the Faith of men: This Church is perfectly manifest to all men who come in contact with it, and is incapable of being mistaken, when duly considered, by God's children; there being but one possible form of true Religion, namely, that which is the sum and result of God's Revealed Truth; there being but few Elements in the Question of the True Church, and they simple and decisive, and the supreme one being Supernatural; so that the Marks which the Church of the living God has, are few, clear, and infallible: These Infallible Marks of this True Church of Christ, are the constant and inevitable product of the Grace of God in every renewed soul, and of the life of God in his Church; they are responsive to the whole nature, end, and power, of Revealed Religion; they are correlates of the fundamental divisions of the science of the Knowledge of God, namely, God, man, Godman; they are expository of the mode of God's existence, and of the way of man's salvation; and finally, they are distinctly and verbally revealed to be, Faith in Christ Jesus, the Worship of God in Spirit and in Truth, and Holiness of heart and life; which being absent—there is no Christian—no Church.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CHILDREN OF GOD UNITED INTO A VISIBLE KINGDOM FOR CHRIST. FUNDAMENTAL IDEA AND ELEMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE CHURCH OF GOD.

I. 1. Communion of the Saints with Christ through Faith, and their Communion with each other in Love.—2. The Idea of the Church based on the Headship of Christ and the Communion of Saints.—3. Nature of the Bonds which are involved in this Divine Institute.—4. Absolute and Supreme Relation of Christ to each Saint, and to the great Brotherhood of Saints.—5. The Church of Christ and the Human Race are not commensurate with each other.—II. 1. The Divine Procedure in the gradual and permanent Organization of the Visible Church.—2. The Saints destitute of a Visible Organization before the Call of Abraham: Effects of the Sacrament of Circumcision —3. Giving of the Sacrament of the Passover: Its Relation to Christ, to the Organization of his Kingdom, and to the World.—4. The Institutions of Moses; Complete Rejection of the World, and Organization of a Kingdom for Messiah out of God's Covenant People.—5. Appreciation of the Church under its Mosaic Form, in itself, and in comparison with preceding and succeeding Forms. —6. The Advent of Christ: New Form of the Church: Call of the Gentiles: The Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper: Authority and organizing Work of the Apostles.—7. The Gospel Church State: Brief Appreciation of it.—8. The Future of the Church: The same Principles under more glorious Forms.—9. Restatement of elemental Truths.

I.—1. The Knowledge of God Subjectively Considered, may be divided into two great portions, the first of which would embrace what has gone before, and the second would begin here. For, considering everything to result from our union with Christ, the distinction would be between such things as are personal and individual, and such as require a general and aggregate treatment: that is to say, such things as result to the individual believer united to Christ, by reason of his communion with Christ; and such as result to all believers by reason of their communion with each other, resulting from their mutual union and communion with Christ. What has been done thus far being, that I have endeavoured, in the First Book, to disclose that eternal Covenant of Grace through which all mercy comes to us as sinners; in the Second Book, to explain the chief blessings and

benefits which, by this means, we individually receive; and in the Third Book, to point out the great offices which every follower of Christ is individually obliged and enabled to discharge: what remains, would belong more especially to the aggregate consideration of these followers of the Lord, contemplated in the various aspects they present as composing the Kingdom of Messiah—the people and Church of the living God. It is, first, the nature of the covenant itself, together with the method of its application to individual persons, and the personal results which uniformly follow: and then, it is the social and public results, which follow with the same uniformity, together with their method and effects. Throughout, it is the absolute and unlimited Headship of the divine Redeemer; throughout, it is the union of the believer with him; the difference is between personal effects and results, flowing to us individually from our communion with him by Faith; and the social, general, organic effects and results, flowing to believers in common, by reason of their communion with each other in Love. It is, first, the individual Christian; then, it is the Church of Christ. And though it is impossible to treat either aspect of the subject wholly disregardful of the other—still there is an obvious distinction between the two; a distinction which I have hitherto constantly regarded, in treating the question of religion in its eminently personal aspect; and which I shall henceforth equally regard, in treating the more corporate and public aspect of it. It is as really true that Christ has a Kingdom, as that he has disciples; but the former is composed out of the latter; and while the outward form of the one has changed and will change again, the terms of true discipleship never did, and never can change. Christ's kingly office, in its strict sense, has relation to those only to whom his priestly sacrifice and intercession, and his prophetic teaching have relation; and in the order of thought, as well as in that of practical development, he is first our Priest to redeem each one of us, and then our Prophet to teach each one of us, and then our King to rule over us, not only individually, but unitedly as constituting his Church—his Kingdom.

2. God's dealings with us as individual persons, our duties and relations to him as distinct and separate beings—each one acting for himself, and with God; this is the manner in which

God knoweth from eternity them that are his,[1] the manner in which the work of Grace is begun in our souls, the manner in which we shall give account to God in the last day. Created in the image of God, restored by Grace to that lost image, each separate, self-conscious, ever-living personality, is a shadow of the infinite personality of God ; just as the wonderful method of the unity of the whole race, is a shadow of the infinite unity of God ; and as the reproduction of the race upon itself, in an endless unity, of endless fathers and sons, is a shadow of the infinite relations between the unity and the personality of the incomprehensible God.[2] So God does not deal with men exclusively as individual, separate personalities : but he deals with the whole race as one—and he deals with the great subdivisions of that race, which his own providence has created and sustained: and he has by divine ordination, organized those permanent and universal institutions which we call households, and commonwealths, which touch us so nearly, and affect our destiny so deeply. Above all, there is that divine fellowship, and the divine institute erected upon it, springing immediately and universally from our mutual fellowship with our common Lord ; that communion with each other, of all who are united to him, and the Kingdom of Messiah as the result, instantly dependent upon our common union with Messiah himself. Thus new relations and duties, other blessings and benefits, further manifestations of Faith and Obedience, additional developments of the life of God in the renewed soul, open widely before our advancing footsteps and urge us forward to higher efforts and wider attainments. The fellow-citizens of the saints are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit ;[3] and every one of them as a spiritual stone is built up in that spiritual house.[4]

3. As all our relations to God, as sinners saved by Grace, are through the Lord Jesus Christ by whom alone we have access to the Father ;[5] so all our relations to each other as the children of God, are through his only begotten Son our Saviour.[6] We become heirs of God by becoming brothers of the Lord Jesus :[7] and we become brethren to each other, in the bonds of the Spirit, by

[1] 2 Tim., ii. 19 ; Rom., viii. 29 ; Rev., xiii. 8.
[2] Gen., i. 26–28 ; ii. 7.
[3] Eph., ii. 19–22.
[4] 1 Pet., ii. 5.
[5] John, xiv. 6 ; Col., i. 18.
[6] Matt., xxiii. 8–10 ; Eph., iv. 15, 16.
[7] Gal., iv. 4, 5 ; Heb., ii. 11, 12.

becoming brethren of the Saviour of sinners.[1] In neither case is this spiritual bond the exclusive bond which binds us to God and to each other; for God is our Creator, Lawgiver, and Ruler, as well as our God in covenant; and we are brethren by nature as well as through grace. But this spiritual bond unites us to God and to each other by a common salvation, whereby a new, spiritual, and eternal life common to us all, is added to all other bonds which unite us to God and to each other;—this bond depending for its efficacy—nay for its existence—upon the truth as it is in Jesus, taken in its fullest sense. We may, in our ignorance, deny—or in our spiritual pride, reject the claims of Christ's brethren upon us, as our brethren; or we may, in our folly and unfaithfulness, admit the claims of those who deny Christ. But in neither case, can our conduct change the eternal nature of things. If we are the children of God, every true follower of Christ is our brother; and in the sense of divine things, no one else can be. We may make schism in the Church, which is the body of Christ, by rejecting our brethren; but they are our brethren still. We may waste and defile our inheritance, by acknowledging as joint heirs such as have no title; but this does not make them sons of God. It is God who made them his sons by adoption, through their brotherhood with Jesus Christ; it is not we, who by calling them our brethren, can constitute them brethren of Christ and sons of God.

4. This is that great brotherhood which is described so variously in the Sacred Scriptures. Unitedly, they are the Church of the living God—the Bride of the Lamb—the General Assembly of the First Born—the Innumerable Host whose names are written in the Book of Life. They are the objects of the eternal love of the Father, of the redeeming love of the Son, of the renewing and sanctifying love of the Spirit. It is in Christ their Head and Lord—their Priest and Prophet and King—their Redeemer—their Saviour, that they must always be considered; whether individually as he was given for them and as they were chosen in him; or as gathered into one body and so sustaining new relations to each other, to the universe, and to God. They are Christ's people, given to him from eternity, and purchased with his blood; and from that grand truth all their fitness to be a people arises, and all their relations as such are controlled by it. The portion

[1] Eph., ii. *passim*; iv. 1–7.

of them at any time on earth, constitutes Christ's Kingdom at that time in the world; and in that conception all their fitness to be members of a spiritual Kingdom is grounded, and all their duties as such find both their form and their foundation. Upon any other basis, the whole subject is liable to be involved in endless difficulties: upon this clear, divine, and eternal foundation, it is susceptible of a simple and complete exposition.[1]

5. The Kingdom of God on earth under the Covenant of Grace, is not commensurate with the whole of mankind, as it proposed to be under the Covenant of Works; and this great distinction lying at the foundation of the subject, is felt in every subsequent part of it. The first Adam being the natural head of his race, was constituted the federal head of all that race descending from him by natural generation: the second Adam is the head of those supernaturally united to him—they being, as the Scriptures plainly teach and as universal experience shows, only a part of the human race. The Church of Christ is a Kingdom, taken out of all other kingdoms, and existing in the midst of them all. It is a Kingdom creating itself by divine means, out of the members of all kingdoms in whose bosom it exists, maintaining with the whole of them a perpetual conflict of life and death. These great truths modify every other part of the subject; and it is idle for us to evade the most distinct recognition of them. However free the Gospel offer may be—however infinite the riches of the Grace of God—however boundless the merits of Christ; nothing in the history of the world is so palpable, as that the whole race of mankind has not followed Christ, or constituted his Church; and the Scriptures teach us nothing more plainly, than that this great fact was as fully recognized in the eternal Covenant of Grace, and the eternal purpose and decree of God connected therewith, as it is in the all-pervading course of his providence, and the practical manifestation of his grace.[2]

II.—1. Having thus obtained a precise and elemental conception of the Church of the living God, as regards the members of it—the fundamental principles of its existence—and the absolute relation of Christ to it; we turn from this analysis to behold the

[1] Eph., i. 10, 21–23; 1 Cor., xii. 12, 13.

[2] Matt., xi. 25; xiii. 15; John, iii. 19; vi. 44; Acts, vi. 44; xiv. 18; Rom., ix. 22, 23; 1 Cor., ii. 8.

universal brotherhood itself, realized in successive ages, and struggling under all outward conditions, through a world from which they were inwardly separated by their divine calling, and outwardly by their divine organization. We have in the divine record, every step taken by God—slowly, distinctly taken, through long ages, whereby his individual children were visibly separated to himself, and visibly united with each other—and the world itself by the same slow and reiterated process, more and more visibly rejected by God, as forming no part of the Kingdom of Messiah. We have the consummation of the whole in the Gospel Church State, founded and ordered by the Apostles of the Lord. God has declared to us the principles on which he acted, and the end he had in view; he has narrated to us the successive steps he took; he has set before us the result reached, when the volume of inspiration closed; and his people have had in their hands for eighteen centuries, his word to guide them, as they compared what he had caused to be so plainly written for their guidance, with all the vicissitudes which the Christian Church has endured. Situated as the present generation is, we are as completely without excuse when we pervert the ordinances of God, touching our duties and our blessings considered as members of the Church of God, as when we do the like considered merely as personal followers of Christ.

2. For a long course of ages, it does not appear that there was any visible mark of separation by which the people of God were distinguished from his enemies round about them; further than their more reverent observance of the Sabbath-day, their more godly lives, and their more habitual and sincere offering of sacrifice to God, may be considered as having thus distinguished them. The Church, as such, seems to have had no outward organization; further than those immense households, which supplied for so many ages the place of the civil State, may have supplied also the place of the spiritual commonwealth, during the patriarchal times. This ancient state of society, both as it regarded the civil and religious state of man, was extremely remarkable when compared with what we behold now; and yet it lasted largely more than a third part of the past life of the human race. For about twenty-two centuries after the Fall, God appears to have forborne to organize his Visible Church in any special outward manner; allowing his people to occupy such a

relation towards the human race, as if, by any means, through his great mercy, the whole race would accept him for their God and Saviour, and thus avoid the necessity of any special organization of his Church, distinct from society itself. It is striking to note that this long forbearance of God to reject the race, and organize his kingdom as one separate and distinct, was attended by two apostacies of mankind, both almost universal. For it was not till the old world, except the family of Noah, had forsaken God and perished in the deluge—nor until the new world, four centuries after the flood, had forsaken him again ; that he called Abraham to be the father of the faithful, and placed in his flesh the mark which typically, visibly, and sacramentally divided between God's people and his enemies.[1] Thenceforward an outward and perpetual separation of the people of God from all people besides, was openly ordained of God. God has visibly begun to reject the world—by the same act of sovereign grace and love whereby he signalizes all the mercy yet in store, not only for his elect, but for the world itself, through the seed of Abraham, and whereby he commences the new condition of the Kingdom of Messiah, as a visible Kingdom which is to subvert all kingdoms. And yet, after how many ages of sin was it, on the part of the world, and of long-suffering on the part of God, that he thus rejected it ! How little did the world, thus permanently rejected of God, take heed of what was done ? How small a part of the elect of God were privy to this act—and how small a part of all it signified and sealed was then comprehended ?

3. For more than four hundred years longer, God bore with the sins of man, and with their oppression of his Chosen people, upon whom he had placed his name and his love, and to whom he had bound himself afresh by covenant. Then he interfered again, organizing still further the Kingdom of Messiah, and by a new and visible mark of separation between his people and all other people, sealed unto himself afresh the seed of Abraham at the darkest hour of their long bondage in Egypt. Amidst the universal lamentation of their oppressors, wailing for their first born in every house, he bestowed on Israel the second Sacrament of his ancient Church, setting forth their true deliverer and the manner of the deliverance itself.[2] By Circumcision they had been organized as a distinct people, rejecting all other peo-

[1] Gen., xii. 1–3; xvii. *passim.*

[2] Exod., xii. *passim.*

ple, and cut off from them : and in the light of this great truth they walked four hundred years. By the Passover they were still further separated and organized, and sealed over to the Saviour crucified for them—Christ their Passover[1]—the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world :[2] and in the light of this still more glorious truth, they walked as a people for fifteen centuries, till the fulness of the time had come, that Christ should be offered up. This sovereign act of God in Egypt, full of mercy to his people, and the forerunner of overwhelming ruin to his enemies, was pregnant with intimations of his eternal purpose concerning his Church, on which it rested—and of the wonderful manifestations thereof which succeeding ages have witnessed. But we must bear in mind that the long-suffering of God had waited more than twenty-five centuries, before his people were brought, in this miraculous Exodus from Egypt, into complete, visible, organic consecration to him ; and before the world, as such, was utterly, and finally, and sacramentally rejected, from all hope of participation in the Messianic Kingdom. And the amazing event was signalized upon the Seed of the Serpent, by the ruin of the greatest nation then existing, and followed by the slaughter of many inferior but still powerful communities ; and then it was confirmed and illustrated by the miraculous pilgrimage of Israel, passing through forty years of wonders, from centuries of bondage on the Nile, to longer centuries of glory beyond the Jordan.

4. Until Israel pitched their tents in the wilderness of Sinai, the people of God on earth had no written revelation of his will, unless the Book of Job may be supposed to be of earlier origin than the writings of Moses ; neither had they any separate, and visible organization, as such, earlier than that produced by the sacrament of Circumcision given to Abraham, and the sacrament of the Passover given to his Seed according to the promise, in Isaac ; nor any settled Church State, nor any outward bond distinct from that of the household, nor any ordered spiritual commonwealth cognizable by the world. What, precisely, may be inferred from the extremely ancient existence of Elders amongst the people, and from the tribal form to which all ancient society had a necessary tendency, and which entered so early and so permanently into all the societies formed amongst the descendants

[1] 1 Cor., v. 7. [2] John, i. 29.

of Abraham ; is too remote in its nature, and too indistinct in its immediate bearing upon the present statement, to need particular enquiry. Everything shows that a new dispensation of the Church of God commenced with the calling of Abraham. And whether we consider the state of the ancient Church before his call, and after it as long as any traces of it remain amongst peoples not descended from him, or even among those actually descended from him except through Isaac : or consider the covenants made with him by God ; or the providence of God towards him and his seed by promise ; or the history of the Church in his family down to the complete establishment of the Jewish commonwealth : nothing is more distinct than the gradual organization of a visible Church, by means of outward divine ordinances, in their nature sacramental, and outwardly preclusive of all who were not God's people in covenant. It was in the wilderness of Sinai, and by the hands of Moses the servant of God, that this great conception of a visible Church outwardly distinct from the world, and of the rejection of the world, had its perfect realization. It is of no consequence to the present matter, that the visible Church of God and the Hebrew commonwealth, were identified in so many respects, by the institutions of Moses. Indeed the thorough organization and visibility of the Kingdom of God, and its complete rejection of the world, became only the more distinct in this manner. It is Jesus Christ who completes the realization of this conception, as he does of all divine conceptions ; and when he opened again the Kingdom of Heaven to the Gentiles, and opened up to the brotherhood of the saints the natural and universal brotherhood of man—it was by presenting the unqualified rejection of the world in every aspect it could bear, and the absolute completeness of his own Kingdom, as perfectly distinct from it. The more the Headship of Christ, and the communion of his saints with each other through their universal union with him, are realized in outward forms, the more completely do we find the Church organized, and the world rejected. Nor is it from human reason or human authority, much less from the accidents of time and events, that these things take their rise, and make their progress : they spring from the immediate command of God, and proceed under his immediate guidance. Whether by Abraham, or by Moses, it is by God himself that his Kingdom passes into new forms, and assumes more perfect outward states. It is this which is everywhere uppermost,

in the writings and the institutions of the great Jewish Lawgiver. And what he really did was, in obedience to the divine command to erect under a peculiar form, a visible Kingdom for God, founded on the total visible rejection of the world, and the complete visible organization of a people in covenant with God; the two elemental ideas of it being, the absolute Headship of Messiah, and the communion of all the members with each other, through their union and communion with him.

5. That wonderful dispensation continued for fifteen centuries, as the outward form of the Church; and eighteen subsequent centuries of persecution, dispersion, and the hidings of God's countenance, have not sufficed to obliterate from the minds of the ancient people of God, the fixed idea that Messiah has a distinct people, and that their organization springs from their mutual oneness in him; which I have shown was the elemental foundation, in this aspect, of the organizing work both of Abraham and Moses. It was a dispensation perfect of its kind: and if any dispensation of its peculiar type could have achieved the whole purpose of the grace of God, this would have done it.[1] Under it, the canon of the Old Testament Scriptures was completed, and the system of divine truth unto salvation, thus permanently embodied and held forth, was advanced to the highest point short of the personal teaching of the Son of God, and the perpetual indwelling of the Holy Ghost with the new power which began at Pentecost. By means of it, the Church of God, however peculiar and temporary in its general aspect, had developed in its bosom those great constitutions concerning her rule, her instruction, and her worship—the Elder, the Prophet, and the Synagogue, which survived the civil, and ceremonial, and sacrificial systems, and became the basis of the form of the Gospel Church. And I venture to add, that whenever it was administered in its purity, the most perfect form of the administration of the temporal interests of society ever known on earth, was exhibited through all the vicissitudes to which a great people can be exposed, during the longest national career. Yet the great Apostle of the Gentiles, while he lauds that dispensation, considered of itself and considered with reference to its real design, as worthy of all reverence;[2] allows himself to call its elements weak and beggarly, and its service a bondage,[3] when compared with the dis-

[1] Gal., iii. 21. [2] Gal., iii. 19, 24. [3] Gal., iv. 9.

pensation of Christ himself, and with the efficacy and glory which attended it. It was as if God would show that no legal, no sacrificial, no typical, no ritual dispensation can suffice. He had already shown, before he rejected the world and separated his people visibly from it, that no long-suffering would move it to serve him; and now he would show, that even those consecrated to himself must have that which is more effectual than laws, and sacrifices, and rites, and types, in order to their due service and adequate enjoyment of him. However long the delay may be, the Son of God must come in the flesh. It had been seen from eternity that there was no other remedy; and everything else was in order to this.

6. At length the Saviour came. Emptying himself of his glory, made of a woman, made under the law—he who, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God—being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.[1] He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.[2] For himself, he was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God; for which the two reasons assigned are, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.[3] But his Kingdom, neither limited by the call of Abraham, nor by the institutions of Moses, both of which had been only stages of its development; was to embrace, henceforth, those who loved him, whether Jews or Greeks, circumcision or uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free.[4] And so he expressly directed, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem:[5] the very mission of his Apostles being, to teach and to baptize all nations.[6] Thus he said directly to Peter, that he gave unto him the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and that whatsoever he should bind on earth should be bound in heaven, and whatsoever he loosed on earth should be loosed in heaven;[7] and he said as expressly to all his Apostles, whatever ye bind or loose on earth, shall be bound or loosed in heaven.[8] And there is recorded in detail, the opening of the Kingdom so long closed to

[1] Phil., ii. 8–11. [2] Titus, ii. 14. [3] Rom., xv. 8–12.
[4] Col, iii. 10, 11. [5] Luke, xxiv. 47. [6] Matt., xxviii. 19.
[7] Matt, xvi. 19. [8] Matt., xviii. 18; John, xx. 23; 1 Cor., v. 4.

all except the descendants of Abraham, by the hands of Peter, in the case of the Gentile Cornelius :[1] concerning which matter, we have Peter's own repeated assurance, that he acted by the express call of God ;[2] and concerning the grand truth then realized, we have the general judgment of the Apostles and Elders.[3] Touching the general power to bind and loose, vested in the Apostles—the power to take down all that was temporary in the ancient institutions—to transfer all that was permanent, even from the creation of man, into the new dispensation—and to erect that form of the Kingdom which we have in the Gospel Church State ; it is one chief design of one entire Book of the Scriptures (the Acts of the Apostles) to teach us what was done, and in what manner : and throughout all the subsequent portions of the New Testament, this is one of the great matters in which the will of God is continually revealed to us. Amongst the last acts of Christ before his crucifixion, was the institution of that sacrament which commemorates his sacrifice in our stead :[4] and amongst his last commands after his resurrection, was that in all nations all his disciples should receive that other sacrament of Baptism, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.[5] That the Kingdom erected in this form, was to be a visible Kingdom, not of this world but wholly separate from it—that the glorified Redeemer was the only Head, King, and Lord of it—that membership in this Kingdom depended on union and communion with the Head and Redeemer of the Kingdom—and that all the members of it are members one of another, by virtue of their being all members of Christ : these are the common and constant doctrines of the Scriptures, which it is needless to prove again in this place. The whole work of Christ discloses, everywhere, the ideas I have been stating. The world so far from receiving him, crucified him. His own knew and accepted him. And what events attended and followed this new and glorious development of God's purpose concerning his Church ! What is the silent rejection of the nations in the gift of circumcision to Abraham, or the fearful catastrophe of Egypt at the institution of the Passover, or the slaughter of many nations which signal-

[1] Acts, x. *passim.* [2] Acts, xi. 1–18; xv. 7. [3] Acts, xv. 23–31.

[4] Matt., xxvi. 26–30; Mark, xiv. 22–26· Luke, xxii. 19, 20; John, xiii. 1, 2; 1 Cor., xi. 23–29.

[5] Matt., xxviii. 19; Mark, xvi. 15, 16.

ized the establishment of the Jewish dispensation; what are such things, to the crucifixion of the Son of God, and to all that followed it of mercy and of wrath—and to all of both, that is yet to come!

7. It is this Gospel Church which we now behold, with its Sabbath, its Sacraments, its divine Scriptures, its pure faith, its spiritual worship, its holy life, its Elders, its Teachers, its Congregations, its assemblies, its divine Lord! Upon us, after so many centuries, has come this dispensation of the Kingdom of God with power, which succeeded the Ascension of the Lord. The followers of Jesus are gathered out of all nations. The promised Comforter abides with us.[1] The last days still continue; the last manifestation, and the most complete, of God's grace in saving sinners.[2] And they shall all continue until he whose right it is, shall come and shall take the Kingdom. And while they continue, whosoever will call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved. Here, as in each preceding case, it is a new development of the same Kingdom, as distinct from all that went before, as they were from each other; and here, as always before, the same fundamental characteristics are not only preserved, but are more and more distinct. Assuredly it is more obvious now, than it could have been under any former dispensation, that it is the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ; that this Church is not coincident with the world, but is taken out of it; that each successive dispensation as it gives new grace, new duties, and new powers, at the same time makes the Church more distinctly separate, and consecrates it more completely to Christ. Nor does the history of mankind since the establishment of the Gospel Church, permit us to doubt, that the steadfast power with which the providence of God conducts all things, has made the career of his Church the most distinct element in the career of man, and has made the destiny of all things dependent on hers. In the fate of Egypt, in the fate of the nations cut off by Israel, and in the fate of apostate Israel herself, all men may read the fate of all the nations that forget God, and of every power that exalts itself against Christ.

8. We need not be in doubt concerning that sublime future of the Church of God, which is hastening upon us—for which

[1] John, xiv. 16, 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7.

[2] Joel, ii. 28–32; Zech., xii. 9–12; Acts, ii. 16–21.

the world is so little prepared, and of which it takes so little thought. It will come in its appointed time—it will not tarry. The whole analogy of all the past dealings of God, and the constant declarations of his word, teach us sufficiently that while the great principles which underlie the whole scheme of his grace and providence, will be preserved in all their fulness, and applied with increased distinctness and force; it might—and since he has said so it will—be under new and still more glorious forms, that these sublime principles will be exhibited and applied. They who sit calmly and silently by, listening to that wonderful discourse in which Jehovah disclosed to Abraham the nature and extent of his covenant with him, and sealed all his promises with the sacrament of circumcision: must needs make an almost infinite progression, before they can hear and realize those loud hallelujahs, which will fill the universe, when the Kingdom is delivered up on the Lamb's Book of Life. Still it is the very same Kingdom; and the grand principles which distinguished its feeblest beginnings, are the same which will be illustrated in its supreme consummation, and its eternal glory. Forevermore it will be Christ, and his saints, and a Kingdom composed of them.

9. What I have attempted is, to appreciate the fundamental idea of the Church of the living God, and to that end to disclose its elemental principles, and then to trace in an unbroken course, the divine procedure whereby these principles have yielded to us, the Gospel Church as it this day stands before us. The people of God, considered in their union with Christ, and in their communion with each other through their mutual communion with him, on one side; and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of God's Elect, the only Head, Lawgiver, and King in Zion, on the other; these are the two terms upon which the great problem rests. Between them are the will, and power, and providence of God, developing these two elements through a long course of ages, and a succession of dispensations; and the result is the Gospel Church State, a distinct, divine institute. Of this, Messiah is the Prince, and all his brethren, brethren to each other, are the members. Separate from the world, its mission is the reconquest of the world. Its end is the illustration of the perfections of God, to his own infinite glory, in the everlasting blessedness of the redeemed.

CHAPTER XX.

THE NATURE AND END OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD: WITH THE MEANS OF ESTIMATING BOTH.

I. 1. The Perpetuity of the fundamental Ordinanees of the Chureh of God.—2. Historical Means of appreeiating the Nature and End of the Kingdom of Christ.—3. Praetieal Means.—4. Prophetieal Means.—5. Ethieal Means.—II. 1. The Chureh of Christ is a Kingdom whose Nature is exelusively Spiritual.—2. The peeuliar Form of that Spirituality: Sinners saved by Graee.—3. It is an Everlasting Kingdom.—4. It is to be a Universal Kingdom.—5. Witness Bearing for Christ, the special Mission of the Gospel Chureh.—6. The immediate Objeet of this is, the Extension and Perfeetion of the Kingdom itself.—7. Infinite Freedom and Fitness of the Gospel Offer.—8. The Form and Aetion of the Church in extending and perfeeting itself, illustrates its own Nature and End, as well as the Nature of God's Being and Graee.—9. The obligatory Foree of the divine Organization of the Chureh thus developed: Its Relation to Faith and to Morals.—10. Resourees of the Church in perfeeting and extending herself: These are Marks of her Nature and End.—11. The Position of false Professors and Seets, with reference to the Visible Chureh.—12. The Relation of the Infant Seed of Believers to the Visible Chureh.

I. 1.—I HAVE shown that the entire organization of the Church of God is produced from within outwardly, and has been obtained under the successive and special ordinations of God, by the direction which he gave, from time to time, to the elemental principles which constituted his own idea of his Kingdom. I have also pointed out more incidentally how the Church, under each successive form of it, casting off whatever was peculiar only to the preceding dispensation, has preserved through all dispensations every outward mark responsive to its own absolute nature, which was ever bestowed on it by God. The Sabbath ordained by God at the creation, and ordained afresh as part of the Moral Law at Sinai, endures in its divine force. The worship of God by bloody sacrifices statedly practised from the fall of man, observed by all the patriarchs, erected into the form of a sacrament in the Passover, and thoroughly incorporated with the daily life of the Church under the Mosaic dispensation; so found its consummation in the

sacrifice of the Son of God, that the one offering of himself by which he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, is the living way whereby alone we can enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.[1] The sacraments, though their form be changed, are even more distinctly signs and seals of the Covenant of Grace than they were when first given to the Church. The will of God made known to us by his most holy word, is just the same infallible rule of our faith and our obedience, as when it was personally addressed by God to the ancient saints, or when it was communicated in visions, made known by heavenly messengers, or spoken by inspired Prophets and Apostles. Divine ordinances of worship, of instruction, and of rule, however their form may vary under successive dispensations, have always been of the very essence of the visible Church—have always sprung from God himself—have always been grounded in the exclusive headship of Christ in the Church, in the union and communion of his saints with him, in their communion with each other, and in his rejection of the world and their separation from it. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil, were the emphatic words of the Lord Jesus; Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.[2]

2. We possess in the sacred Scriptures a plain account of the progress of this divine Kingdom on earth, from the fall of man till about the close of the first century of the Christian era, covering a period of forty-one centuries. The subsequent progress of this Kingdom for seventeen centuries and a half, to our own day, is preserved in its own annals, in the records of those who have hated and sought to destroy it, and in the testimonies of those nations which have lived side by side with it through all generations; some of which also precede the advent of Christ by many centuries, and some were coincident with his life, and with the first ages of the Gospel Church. We have its history from the origin of time and of man to the present moment: and of all that has existed on earth this is true concerning it alone. In the age of the Apostles themselves it seems to have penetrated the mass of all human society, and to have found its way to the ends of the earth; and through innumerable vicissitudes, in defiance of perpetual persecution, and notwithstanding its own terrible corruptions and apostacies, it finds itself recognized, after

[1] Heb., x. 10–20. [2] Matt., v. 17–20.

eighteen centuries, by the predominant nations and races of mankind, as a divine Kingdom upon which are staked the highest interests of man and the greatest glory of God. We have means thoroughly complete of estimating its nature and its progress.

3. Invested with such a history, it is living before our faces, the most important and the most wide-spread of all existing institutions. Rent, indeed, in many ways, when casually observed; manifested under various forms, more or less inconsistent with each other; exhibiting in its separate parts an extreme variety of condition, from one of fierce persecution by the world up to one of pampered luxury—from one of earnest struggling for the truth down to one of hopeless indifference concerning Christ. But this diversified state of things affords us the more ample materials for an enlightened judgment, concerning that true and wonderful commonwealth of the saints, which has survived the endless convulsions in which all other institutions have perished, and which seems not only to be established in the heart of all existing civilization, but to be the very parent and nurse of it all.

4. Moreover, to enlarge and rectify our appreciation, alike of this vast history both divine and human, and of this boundless existing manifestation, we are furnished in the Scriptures with the prophetic history of this city of God to the end of time. If we choose to allege that the prophecies which constitute so large a part of the divine word, are wrested and misapplied by the most of those who have expounded them; this only leaves to us a greater mass of history yet to be enacted, the whole of which we must take some account of, in forming our judgment of the absolute nature, the total progress, and the ultimate destiny of the Messianic Kingdom. In every such attempt we have this immense advantage, that besides knowing what is past, and seeing what exists, we are instructed also concerning what is to come.[1]

5. There are, however, means still surer than those already pointed out—complete as they appear to be—of estimating the nature and end of that Kingdom of God whose divine idea and elemental principles I have endeavoured to trace in the preceding chapter. God has himself defined everything for us. He has not only caused the detailed history of his Church for four

[1] 2 Peter, i. 19–21.

thousand years, to be written by inspired men, and the prophetic history of it to the end of time to be added in like manner—causing also the whole history and the whole prophecy to be a perpetual and mutual commentary upon each other ; but he has explained clearly the motive and end of that Kingdom whose design, progress, and final triumph, all this history and prophecy concerned. To what end he set up such a Kingdom, and under what inducements ; the precise nature of the Kingdom itself—what objects exactly it was designed to accomplish—and by what means ; these are the very things which invest the progress of the Kingdom with such importance, and lend so much glory to the prophecies, which foretell, and to the histories which record its career. The Lord God said unto the serpent, I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed : it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.[1] How widely separated in knowledge as well as in centuries, is this earliest form in which the nature and design of the Kingdom of Messiah is expressed, from the form in which its triumph is expressed—Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world : Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels![2] But that vast interval of time is not more completely filled up with the progress of the Church, than that vast interval in knowledge is filled up with divine instruction concerning her nature and end.[3]

II.—1. In attempting to disclose, briefly, that which I have just shown we have such abounding materials for appreciating justly ; the whole current of thought which distinguishes this Treatise, and the special care which has been taken in explaining the doctrines of grace and salvation, render it unnecessary to prove afresh that the Kingdom of Christ is exclusively a spiritual Kingdom. Separated unto God by an eternal election,[4] separated unto Christ by the effectual calling of his word and Spirit during their earthly pilgrimage,[5] separated unto eternal glory and blessedness in the world to come ;[6] whatever Kingdom these children of God may constitute—to the exclusion of all others—is as necessarily a Kingdom created and held united by the Spirit

[1] Gen., iii. 14, 15. [2] Matt., xxv. 34, 41.
[3] Eph., v. 25–32 ; Matt., xvi. 18 ; 1 Cor., xii. 12, 13 ; Rom., xv. 8–17.
[4] John, xi. 51, 52. [5] 1 Cor., i. 9. [6] Rev., vii. 9, 10.

of God, as it is one whose Lord is the Lord of glory. And so the Saviour said plainly to Pilate, My Kingdom is not of this world.[1] Nor in all his wondrous teaching is anything made more clear, than that in order to see his Kingdom we must be born again—in order to enter into it we must be born of water and of the Spirit.[2] That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.[3] Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God: neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.[4] But the Church of Christ is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all; and God, in giving him to be its head, hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to the Church.[5]

2. This spirituality thus disclosed is, however, of an exceedingly peculiar kind. For what is demanded is, not only fitness for a Kingdom altogether spiritual, but a spiritual fitness created by a new and divine generation of a human soul dead in trespasses and sins.[6] This Kingdom is composed exclusively of penitent and believing sinners, who are saved by divine grace. Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it:[7] but it is sinners, and not the righteous, whom Jesus calls to repentance.[8] They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.[9] Utterly different from any Kingdom which could be formed of fallen men, who are unregenerate, the Kingdom of Messiah is also wholly different from any which could have been formed of men who had never fallen. At the foundation of this latter difference lies the sublime reality, that saved sinners share a common nature with the Son of God, in a twofold manner; namely, by his assumption of their nature in his incarnation, and by their participation of his nature through their regeneration.[10]

3. This is also an everlasting Kingdom. For Immanuel's throne and dominion are forevermore, and the increase of his government and peace shall have no end:[11] and the Kingdom of the saints of the Most High is an everlasting Kingdom.[12] However the world and Satan may have appeared to prevail against the Kingdom of God, under the antecedent forms of it; as soon as there was written upon its immovable foundation—*Christ, the*

[1] John, xviii. 36, 37.
[2] John, iii. 1–13.
[3] John, iii. 6.
[4] 1 Cor., xv. 50.
[5] Eph., i. 22, 23.
[6] Eph., ii. *passim*.
[7] Eph., v. 25.
[8] Matt., ix. 13.
[9] Matt., ix. 12.
[10] John, i. 14; 2 Peter, i. 4.
[11] Isaiah, vii. 14; ix. 6, 7.
[12] Daniel, ii. 44; vii. 27.

Son of the living God ;—from that moment the gates of hell lost all power to prevail.[1] However it may have repented God when he saw the exceeding wickedness of man, that he had made him on the earth ;[2] the gifts of God to his Church and his saints, and his calling of his saints into his Kingdom, are without repentance.[3] If God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things ?[3] And if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.[5] Always, everywhere, even unto the end of the world, Christ is with us :[6] and when time, and earth, and sin, are done with forever, infinite glory and blessedness await the Kingdom and the saints of him who hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, *King of kings, and Lord of lords !*[7]

4. This Kingdom is to be universal, even upon this earth. So far is it from being possible that it should fail, the assured end of the conflict which so many ages have already witnessed will be, that the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ ; and he shall reign forever and ever.[8] The followers of Christ differ widely, as to the times and the seasons of bringing to pass this great purpose of God : they differ also as to the form and as to the substance of the event itself : nor is it under such circumstances the part of wisdom to assert, as of faith, peculiar dogmas concerning this glorious hope common to us all, which is admitted to be not yet realized. As to the general truth involved, no one may call himself a Christian and deny that God manifest in the flesh is to be believed on in the world, any more than he may deny either of the other incontrovertible elements of the mystery of godliness.[9] It is no more certain that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now ;[10] than it is that the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God ;[11] than that there shall be new heavens and a new earth wherein shall dwell nothing but righteousness, and none but they whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life ;[12] and that the saints shall live and reign

[1] Matt., xvi. 13–18.
[2] Gen., vi. 6.
[3] Rom., xi. 29.
[4] Rom., viii 32.
[5] Rom., v. 10.
[6] Matt., xxviii. 20.
[7] Rev., xix. 16 ; xxii. 1–5.
[8] Rev., xi. 17.
[9] 1 Tim., iii. 16.
[10] Rom., viii. 22.
[11] Rom., viii. 21.
[12] 2 Peter, iii. 13 ; Rev., xxi. 1, 27.

with Christ upon earth.[1] The stone that was cut out without hands shall not only break in pieces and consume every earthly Kingdom, but it shall become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth.[2] Behold, saith God, all souls are mine ;[3] as I live, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue confess to God.[4]

5. The children of this Kingdom have an unspeakable mission. Nor is this more remarkable in anything, than in their relation to the method by which the Kingdom itself is perfected and extended. Almost at the moment of Christ's final ascension to heaven, his Apostles, encouraged by the condescension and distinctness of his parting instructions to them, ventured to inquire particularly concerning the very subjects I have been discussing. They asked him, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel ?[5] His answer was clear and decisive. It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Ghost is come upon you : and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.[6] To be witnesses for Jesus, both in the testimony they bear, and in the warfare they carry on, is the especial mission of every member of his Kingdom in its present form, involved in the very nature and end of the Kingdom itself. Each one, no doubt, in his place and according to his lot and the grace given to him ;[7] but every one of the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people, showing forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.[8] The Gospel Church, in the form given to it by the Apostles, is the fruit of their divine vocation and authority received from the Lord, and of their anointing with the Spirit on the day of Pentecost ; and the dispensation of the Spirit with power and the militant state of the Gospel Church, both lie between the anointing and the fit time and exact season reserved by the Father exclusively to himself.[9] Our fitness to bear the testimony required of us as members of Christ and members one of another,[10] de-

[1] Rev., xx. 4–10 ; 2 Tim., ii, 11, 12.
[2] Daniel, ii. 35, 44.
[3] Ezekiel, xviii. 4.
[4] Rom., xiv. 11 ; Phil., ii. 10, 11.
[5] Acts, i. 6.
[6] Acts, i. 7, 8.
[7] Eph., iv. 1–16.
[8] 1 Peter, ii. 9.
[9] Matt., xxiv. 30 ; Mark, xiii. 32 ; 1 Thess., v. 1, 2.
[10] Eph., v. 30 ; iv. 25 ; Rom., xii. 5.

pends upon our own communion with Christ through faith, and with each other in love: and both of these depend immediately, as I have shown, upon the power and the illumination of the Holy Ghost shed abroad within us. The promise of the Father, the crowning proof of the glorification of the risen Saviour, and the final unction of the Apostles of the Lord, all agree in one, and all have direct relevancy to the infinite Spirit whose peculiar presence is our great heritage in these last days, by whose power all our witness-bearing is accomplished, and all who call on the name of the Lord are saved.[1]

6. This glorious witness-bearing for Christ, under the support and guidance of his own Spirit, brings us in the special dispensation allotted to us, face to face with all the powers of this world, in all our endeavours to extend the Kingdom of God; and it brings us face to face with our brethren in Christ in all our endeavours to perfect the Kingdom in itself. But to extend the Kingdom of Christ, and to perfect it—by both methods hastening it forward to its glory—are our chief duties, stated in the most general manner, and considering ourselves as of the Household of God, and as fellow-citizens with the saints.[2] This is the form in which the Lord himself has put it: Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you.[3] And the entire nature of Christ's Kingdom is involved in this brief statement. Its mission is to teach: to teach all nations: to teach them all, everything commanded by the Saviour. Here is the immense compass of our duty, and the exact limit of our authority, in winning souls to Christ. And when they have been won, they must be gathered into his fold, and baptized in the name of the Triune God, and taught to observe every command of the Lord. They must be as his children are, and do as his children do. And thus new conquests are made, and thus the Kingdom is perfected within, and thus it grows both in the breadth of its reign, and the power of its life, and thus by both methods our witness-bearing hastens the glory which is to be revealed in us.[4] To keep alive in our hearts an interest corresponding with the work we are called to perform, the Lord Jesus has set before us the most

[1] Joel, ii. 28–32; Acts, ii. 16–21; Rom., x. 12–15.
[2] Eph., ii. 19–22.
[3] Matt., xvviii. 19, 20.
[4] Rom., viii. 18.

overwhelming motives, derived from his own glory and presence with us, and from the infinite reward he will bestow on us. All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life.[1]

7. Thus composed and marshalled, this Kingdom proclaims continually its readiness and its fitness to receive every penitent sinner of our lost race, and to train him in the exalted and eternal service and enjoyment of God. Its banners have no legend more broadly inscribed on them than that faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation—Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.[2] And so its efforts to extend itself, are made in the widest sense of the freedom of the Gospel offer; and against the ranks of its fiercest enemies, its message of defiance is, Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely![3] Amongst its highest obligations, it seeks to keep alive in the hearts of all men, a sense of the infinite perfectness of God's claim upon the whole universe; sounding through all lands the edict of Jehovah—All souls are mine;[4] and warning every creature that God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, and therefore he commandeth all men everywhere to repent.[5] Nor is its duty at all affected, whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear. The infinite fitness and freedom of the offer of salvation, and the infinite right and authority of God by which that offer is enforced, may not, indeed, commend our message to the hearts of men. Some may receive it after many repetitions, some may reject it fiercely and contemptuously, some may turn and rend those who bring it. In general, men will be brought one by one into the Kingdom; in times of great awakening they will come like the countless drops of dew from the womb of the morning: and in the day of glory, a nation will be born at once. He who made his soul an offering for sin, shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.[6] And the children of God insufficient as they may be, yet in all their endeavours are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life.[7]

[1] Matt., xxviii. 18–20; Rev., ii. 10. [2] 1 Tim., i. 15. [3] Rev., xxii. 17.
[4] Ezekiel, xviii. 4. [5] Acts, xvii. 30, 31. [6] Isaiah, lii. 10, 11. [7] 2 Cor., ii. 15, 16.

8. Every one of the heirs of this Kingdom, thus gathered into it, thus perfected in it, and thus in turn extending and perfecting it, stands related to God in such a manner that not only the infinite grace, but the unsearchable being also of God, is manifested upon them all. What is more, their former ruin, and the perfection of their eternal blessedness, are both kept continually before their hearts, in the whole method of their recovery. It is the eternal electing love of God the Father, which is the foundation of their divine call into this Kingdom. It is their redemption through the infinite sacrifice of God the Son, that is the ground of their actual participation of this Kingdom. It is by the work of God the Holy Ghost, that their fitness for this Kingdom and their faithfulness in it, are produced. It is through the influence of the divine Word, and the communion of the saints with Christ and with each other, in their mutual co-operation for perfecting and extending this Kingdom, that the love of God the Father, the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, make themselves practically manifest in the Body of Christ. All the heirs of the Kingdom stand also in such a relation to each other, as is expressive of the nature and extent of the supernatural change which has been wrought in them all. Children of God and brethren of each other—not rebels against God, and aliens from each other—as they were before ; heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ, inheritors together of crowns of glory—not outcasts, and accursed, and hastening to perdition, as they once were. This immeasurable transformation is expressed by saying, they are brethren—being all brethren of Christ and sons of God. In the very mode, therefore, in which the Kingdom of God is constituted, in its most elemental aspect, we find the expression of its very nature and end, and the expression also in a concrete form, of the chief truths which enter into the plan of salvation.

9. It is this Church of Christ that has received from God a particular outward organization, suited to its nature and end, by means of which it may accomplish in the most complete manner, the immediate object of its existence, namely, the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world.[1] If God had given to it no outward organization, no sacraments, no office-bearers, as he appears for many centuries after the fall, not

[1] Eph., iv. *passim.*

to have done ; the Church has no power to ordain them. If God has given any to the Church—as indeed he has—her whole duty and authority in that respect are exhausted, in accepting and fulfilling his divine ordinations. To presume, in either case, to depart from the revealed will of God, is as really to set aside his divine authority, as it would be to change the doctrine, strictly so called, which he has revealed to our faith, or the precepts of morality which he has made the rule of our obedience. Such attempts deliberately made, concerning human sovereignties, are treason, rebellion, revolution : in the Church, they are direct assaults upon the majesty of God, upon the headship of Christ over the Church, and upon the freedom of the Church itself. How far they may be carried, on either hand, without destroying the nature and defeating the end of the visible Church, is a question precisely analogous to similar questions concerning faith and morals. In all three cases, certain departures from the revealed will of God, may be treated as endurable ; others must be considered fatal. Assuredly it is one of the most distinct characteristics of the Gospel Church, that it is the Kingdom of Christ under a visible form, divinely bestowed on it. Its organization is expressly so created and distributed by God, as on the one hand, to make full account of the nature and end of a Kingdom so remarkable ; and on the other, to enable it to move and act, within itself, with the greatest freedom and perfection, and to exert its force without, in a manner the most constant and efficacious. If it were otherwise, both the methods by which it accomplishes its divine mission would be obstructed, or destroyed.

10. It is thus that the Church of the living God, is fitted for her great work on earth. In her hands are all the words of eternal life, which God has revealed in a permanent form for the salvation of man. In her bosom are all the instrumentalities, by which this inspired truth is ordinarily made effectual in the human soul. In the hearts of her children accompanying her ordinances in their faithful use, and attending the divine word committed to her keeping in its circuit through the earth, is that divine Comforter whose outpouring was the great promise of the Father, and whose perpetual presence was one of the last and greatest promises of the Son. Over her and around about her, is that ceaseless and irresistible providence of God, by means of

which he brings all events to pass according to the eternal purpose of his will, and whose whole course is so ordained that all things work together for good to them that love God. And higher than the highest heavens, her glorified Redeemer sits at the right hand of the majesty on high, a Prince and a Saviour—to give repentance to Israel and the forgiveness of sins—head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. Surely we need not doubt that God will make known through his Church, unto principalities and powers, his own manifold wisdom :[1] nor that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, all things will be gathered in one, in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.[2]

11. There are two topics which may be supposed to require a few words of explanation under the view I have presented of the Church of God. One of them concerns the position of such professed members of the visible Church, as are not the children of God : the other concerns the infant seed of true believers. Concerning the former, whatever difficulty may exist lies in the domain of Church Discipline, which I will treat in another place, and not in that of the organization of the Church, which is the subject of immediate consideration. In the nature of the case, the more perfectly the apparent Church corresponds with the real Church, the more perfect the former must be ; and the more completely our definitions in a Treatise like this, express what actually is according to the ordination of God, and not what is merely apparent and delusive, through the wickedness of man, the more nearly does our teaching approach the truth of God. As a question of Ethics and Philosophy, nothing would be more absurd, than to make our definitions false, in order to give a certain validity to appearances which are known to be deceptive. Whatever difficulties may be supposed to exist in the just application of the discipline of the Church, so as to exclude from its communion those whom God has forbidden to approach it ; nothing in the Scriptures is more obvious, nothing in the constant faith of the Church is more settled, nothing is more clear to human reason, than that all children of the Devil are mere intruders into the visible Church, and ought to be cast out of it. They who are not the true followers of Christ, cannot be members of Christ ; they

[1] Eph., iii. 10. [2] Eph., i. 10.

who are not members of Christ cannot be members one of another, in any Christian sense; but the possibility of making the body of Christ visible by means of any external organization, rests upon these two truths, namely, that we are members of Christ, and of each other. Whatever organization is composed on opposite principles, is necessarily corrupt: whatever individual, destitute of fellowship with Christ and with Christ's people, intrudes into a true Church, is merely an intruder. We delude ourselves by a word, forgetting that it is not the same thing to be visibly a member of some organization or denomination of Christians, and to be a member of Christ visibly by being a true member of his visible body. It is another question, altogether, what evidence shall be deemed sufficient, against an individual or against a sect. Concerning which, in both cases, it is very obvious that if either the evidence itself, or the matters established by it, be insufficient, it is at once to usurp the prerogative of Christ, and to outrage our brethren in him, if we reject as false a profession of discipleship, which, for aught that appears, is true.

12. The covenanted duty of Christian parents to dedicate their infant children to God, and the covenanted right of the seed of believers to membership in the Church of God, will be discussed hereafter. At present, it is sufficient to observe that if such a duty rests on Christian parents, and such a right is given by God to their infant seed: then all I have said, so far from excluding such infant members from the visible Church of Christ, necessarily embraces them. Their position is determined absolutely by the decision we arrive at, concerning the effect which the faith of the parent has, on the relation of his infant seed to the covenant through which he is himself saved. When the parent is not in covenant with Christ, it cannot be pretended that he has any covenant duty to his infant seed, or that it has any covenanted right based on the faith of a parent, who has no faith. I suppose that nothing concerning God's dealings with man, whether in creation, in providence, or in grace, is more remarkable, than the use he has made of the parental relation, and the pains he has taken to explain to us that use, and the ground of it.

CHAPTER XXI.

DEDUCTION AND EXPOSITION OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, CONSIDERED AS THE VISIBLE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

I. 1. The Effect of God's gracious Interposition after the Fall, upon Man's Relation to God.—2. The practical Result of that Interposition, generally stated.—3. Theoretical Issue of the Probation of the Human Race, upon the Conditions stated.—4. Revealed Result: Coming of the Son of Man.—II. 1. Divisions of the Human Race, Spiritually Considered: God's manifold Dealings responsive to those Divisions.—2. Manifold Aspect of the Kingdom of God: Visible Church of Christ.—3. Separate from the World, and organized for the Special Ends, and by the Special Means of its Visibility: Concatenation of God's Providence and Grace.—III. 1. Nature of Man and of Society—Fundamental Principles of the Church's Organization—Revealed Ordination of God: Relation between them all.—2. Exhaustive Statement of the Functions of Society, in itself considered:—(*a*) The aggregate Expression of what is Right: Public Will: Law:—(*b*) Enforcement of the Rule of Right—by the aggregate Force: Administrative Authority:—(*c*) Exposition and Application of Law, to Duties and Rights: Judicial Authority.—3. Dependence of these Functions of Society, on the Moral, Rational, and Spiritual Nature of Man: Their Relevancy to God, the universal Lawgiver, Judge, and Ruler.—4. Application of these Principles to the Visible Church: Fundamental Distinction between the Gospel Church and the Civil State.—5. The Law of God the sole Law of the Church of Christ: Nature and Ground of this Peculiarity.—6. Her judicial and executive Functions: Their Nature and Extent.—7. Definition of the Visible Church of Christ, now Militant under the Gospel State thereof.

I.—1. The Fall of Man placed the human race in such an estate, that its universal perdition could be prevented no otherwise, than by the sovereign and gracious interposition of God, changing the relation of that race to himself. That interposition occurred: and a clear account of it, in its whole nature and design, has been given to us by God in the sacred Scriptures. Those inspired writings contain—and they alone contain—the true religion of man considered as a sinner: and that religion embraces the sum of God's sovereign and gracious interposition to prevent the universal perdition of the human race, and, therefore, the sum of what man can need in order to be saved. Yet that interposition of God did not change the relation of our fallen race to him,

by abolishing the true religion natural to man, considered merely as a creature ; but by graciously adding to it, in a way of divine revelation, the true religion needful for man, considered as a fallen and depraved creature. By what is added God becomes the Redeemer, without ceasing to be the Creator ; and the saved sinner remains the dependent creature of God.

2. In point of fact, the whole human family has never been brought under the influence of this new form, in which life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel. On the contrary, besides the original apostacy in Adam, God when he has made inquest on signal and widely separated occasions, has found our sinful race alike ignorant of him, and hostile to him. In the days of Noah he drowned the whole race in the flood of waters, saving alive only Noah and his family. In the days of Abraham God chose him out of a rebellious world, and made his covenant with him as the father of the faithful. In the days of the early Gospel Church, God set aside even his ancient people for their sins, and has scattered them and hidden his face from them ever since. And Christ himself hath demanded concerning what is yet before us, When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth ?[1] The knowledge of the written word of God has never been communicated to any one entire generation of men ; and, even at the present hour, it is probable that the larger part of the human family are in ignorance of God's designs of mercy to fallen men. And of those who have obtained knowledge, more or less complete, on that momentous subject, it is probable that the greater part do not profess to have received the truth in the love of it ; and of those who make that profession, neither the Scriptures, nor our own most charitable judgments permit us to doubt, that multitudes are alike ignorant and destitute of the power of divine love.[2]

3. Such is the practical result of the sovereign and gracious interposition of God for the salvation of sinners, as exhibited by its progress from the beginning of time. And the whole is announced when two most pregnant statements are added. First, that it is not given to mortals to foresee how long, how sad, or how variable the struggle between light and darkness may be, before the final victory is won—nor yet how soon that last triumph may come.[3]

[1] Luke, xviii. 8. [2] Matt., xxv. *passim.*

[3] Matt., xxiv. 36–42 ; Acts, i. 7 ; 1 Thess., v. 1–11.

And secondly, that God's Kingdom has always been, and will continue immovably established, in this rebellious world; and that the heirs of that Kingdom are the salt of the earth—the light of the world.[1] Theoretically, it is not easy to see how this great problem could have worked itself out in a different manner, upon the terms stated; nor how any result, substantially different, could ever be reached, or the subject extricate itself from endless conflict, unless some of the conditions of the problem are radically changed, on one side or the other. For it has been shown that the actual condition of the universe is this, namely, that it lies under the curse of God—with a promise of deliverance; but the curse is broader than the promise in this, that in some sense the curse embraces all, while the promise takes one and leaves another; the one fastening and working with instant and universal force, while the other, pointing chiefly to the future and the unseen, works in the midst of our darkness and pollution. When we speak of the grace of God, the sense is most true and real, but it is also strict: when we speak of the pollution of sin, the sense is not only true, but absolute and universal. And the grace itself, rich as it is, is not merely for our deliverance, but for deliverance in such a way that a true probation is made, alike of those who reject it, and of those who are led in willing captivity to it.

4. The Scriptures, however, leave us in no doubt as to what the real event will be, and how it will be brought to pass. The nature and certainty of the change that will occur in the terms of this problem, so endless and insoluble to human reason, on the conditions stated, are amongst the clearest and grandest parts of the revealed scheme of our deliverance. The advent of Christ was the great promise of the Scriptures of the Old Testament: his second coming is at once the great promise and the great threat of the Scriptures of the New Testament.[2] However we may dispute about that coming, as to its exact manner, its set time, and all its sublime incidents and results; no one who calls himself an heir of the Kingdom of God, ought to doubt the great fact itself, or its decisive and eternal efficacy. He whose right it is, shall take the Kingdom. The Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, and then shall he sit

[1] Matt., v. 13, 14; xxviii. 19, 20.

[2] Matt., xxiv. 29–31; xvi. 26; Mark, xiii. 24–27; Rev., i. 4–8.

upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations.[1]

II.—1. The consequence of such a state of things must be the division of the human family, when spiritually considered, into great classes: and then the subdivision of those classes into subordinate, but still immense masses of human beings. The first division would separate those who have been made acquainted with the salvation of God, from the remainder of the human race; on the one side nominally believing, and on the other unbelieving peoples, races, and nations. Passing by all the latter, the second division would separate, amongst the former, all who profess to love and obey the Lord, from all merely speculative believers, who make no profession of being the people of God. And again passing by all who fall into this latter class, the third division would separate amongst the professed followers of Christ, such as are the true children of God, from all those whose profession is merely a form or a delusion. It is only after these repeated divisions of our race, that the true heirs of eternal life—the true members of the Kingdom of God—can be even theoretically extricated from the mass of our perishing fellow-creatures, and contemplated as divinely set apart for the special glory of God, as his Church. And it is manifest that these various distinctions amongst men, must be responsive to a manifold method of treatment of them by God. His dealings and his manifestations of himself, are not the same towards those who are wholly destitute of all knowledge of his revealed will—towards those who know his will and despise it—towards those whose professions of love and obedience have no solid foundation—and towards those penitent and believing followers of the Lamb who shall inherit all things. These things are not merely casual—any more than those explained immediately before: nor are these mere speculations. I am pointing out results logically unavoidable—attested by the word of God, and by all experience—which belong to the very system of the universe, under the conditions now stamped upon it.[2]

2. In a somewhat analogous manner to these spiritual distinctions which exist amongst the human family, and are responsive to a manifold treatment on the part of God; there are

[1] Matt., xxv. 31, 32; 1 Thess., iv. 14–18; 2 Thess., i. 7–10; Jude, 14, 15.

[2] Luke, xxiv. 25–27; Matt., xxiii. 34–39; xviii. 7.

various aspects in which the Kingdom of Christ, and God's dealings with it, and its relations to man, are presented to us. We may consider it with reference to its absolute unity and universality; embracing every one of the elect of God, whether they be now in glory, or in the flesh, or unborn. Or we may consider it as divided by the stream of death into the Church triumphant, embracing only such as have entered into their rest, and the Church militant, embracing such true followers of Christ as are passing through their pilgrimage. Or we may consider the Church universal under the ordinary division of invisible, and visible; embracing under the former, the universal body of the Elect of God, considered not as they are sinners, but as they are his children; and under the latter, according as we speak loosely or strictly, all living men who profess the name of Christ, or more truly, all living men who are his true followers. In reality, the visible Church can have no existence, except just so far as it is composed of true members of the Church universal; for where there are none of these, there can be no Church of God. Properly speaking, the visible Church can be nothing else but that portion of the true and eternal Kingdom of God, which is apparent on earth: and we might as truly speak of another head of the Kingdom than Christ; or another Creator of it than the divine Spirit, as of other members of it than the elect of God. How far the Church of God is, at any time, visible on earth, can be known infallibly only to him. Whether it is visible to us, is, both theoretically and practically, capable of being precisely determined —as I will show in subsequent chapters; and the knowledge thus attainable, is the guide of Christian fellowship between the various sections, whether national or denominational, into which the Church is divided. Whether particular individuals are to be accepted as worthy members of the visible Church, is also capable of being precisely determined; and the knowledge thus attainable, is the guide for those entrusted with Government and Discipline in the Church of Christ—concerning both of which I will treat hereafter.

3. The Kingdom of God, presented to us throughout the Scriptures in a light distinctly threefold, is called the Messianic Kingdom from its head Messiah—is called the New Creation as being the spiritual creation of the Holy Ghost—and is called the Church of God, and of Christ, from its members, who are indi-

vidually the members of Christ, and are collectively his Body. Nor is it possible for us to have a clear apprehension of its nature, if we omit either of these great ideas concerning it. As soon as this Body of Christ becomes visible on earth—that is, apparent to the world as an institute of God; it becomes at the same time, by the same means, and to the same extent, separate from the world which lies in sin. And every additional ordinance of God, by which its visibility is made more distinct, and its organization more complete; is an additional mark of its separation from the world—an additional means also of preventing its confusion with a world which has rejected God, and even with every other institute which God has ordained in the world. Moreover, as I have before shown, whatever ordinance of God makes the Body of Christ visible and separate, in the same degree organizes it for all the ends of that special visibility and separation; and every additional ordinance of God by which its visibility and separation become more complete, becomes a new force in its own distinct organization, a new means by which the great ends of its existence as visible, separate, and organized may be accomplished. But it has been shown that these great ends are its own perfection and increase; that is, the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world.[1] So that, considering the condition of the universe as it lies under the Covenant of Grace as thus far administered; we behold the outworking of the sentence and the promise of God uttered after the fall of man—the spiritual result upon the human race, exhibited in its great divided masses, and the manifold dealings of God therewith—and the gradual emerging of the organized Kingdom of God into its present form of the Gospel Church. God himself has explained the whole to us in his blessed word; and has pointed out the amazing concatenation of all the parts. The sublime order which pervades all his works, and the infinite fruitfulness of all his acts, are nowhere manifested in a manner more august, than in those vast schemes of providence and grace, which unite in the career and present state of the visible Church of Christ.

III.—1. Our double relation to God as dependent creatures, and as sinners saved by grace, runs through every part of his dealings with us, and is felt in every aspect which his Kingdom

[1] Eph., iv. 1–16; Matt., xvi. 15–20; xviii. 15–20.

presents. We are children of Adam—brethren also of Christ. Our nature is, indeed, depraved by the fall; and the Covenant of Works is abolished as a Covenant of Life. But the fundamental character of our nature as personal, human, spiritual, and immortal, still exists; and the eternal principles on which the Covenant of Works reposed, are still true and operative. Both that nature and those principles are made full account of by God, in every part of his dealings with us under the new and better covenant; and are taken for granted in every part of that organization of God's Kingdom, which, I have just shown, is the unavoidable accompaniment of its separate, visible, existence as a divine institute in this world. But that visible, separate existence in the world, though it is the result both as to the fact of it, and the form of it, of God's sovereign ordination; has been shown to have a direct connection with the manner in which God's sentence and promise work themselves out upon our guilty race, taken as a whole—and upon the spiritual condition of that race, considered in its great divided masses. It remains to trace in the fundamental nature of man, and of society, those unalterable principles upon which the visibility, the separation, and the organization of the Church rest; and which, in the very manner of their necessary operation, accord with the revealed ordination of God concerning the visible Church.

2. However large and obscure what is called the science of Government may be supposed to be, its most elemental principles are as clear as those of any science whatever, and are, perhaps, fewer in number, and more fruitful in operation, than those of any other science. As soon as men are united permanently in what we call society, there immediately result certain necessities, operations, forces, which spring from the organization itself, which are developed by its formation and action, and without which the existence of society is impossible. This occurs in the very nature of the case; it results from the nature of man and of society—and from the relations of both to God. It occurs in every possible society formed of men, without the smallest regard to the form society may take, or the object for which it exists, or the motive of its creation. And so complete is this spontaneous and unavoidable development, that except the necessities, operations, forces, to which I allude, nothing else results from the organization and existence of society, having any analogy to these;

nothing else can, by any possibility be made to result from its organization—and every exigency of every possible form of society, capable of control by society in its organized form, must seek redress from one or other of these functions. Let me explain this a little.

(*a*) In the first place, there results, in some form or other, the expression of the aggregate will: the manifestation, in some way or other, of the dominant sense of what ought to be done, or left undone, in everything of which society chooses to take cognizance. Law, in some form or other, rules whenever society exists: and in whatever form law exists in society, it exists by whatever will—power—is dominant there. Whether it appears in the shape of immemorial custom, of the decree of an absolute ruler, of a written constitution and ordinary statutes—or of any other conceivable public rule; its abiding nature is, that it must appear, and must predominate. It is the supreme necessity, operation, force, springing out of the existence of society—without which that existence is impossible. This is the fundamental principle, which underlies the possibility of organized society: and its efficacy is so boundless, that no limits can be set in thought, nor have any been established in practice, to the extent of its reign, or the variety of its applications. Even the Kingdom of God, and in that blessed form of it, where God is our God and we are his people, will be made effectual by his putting his law in our inward parts, and writing it in our hearts.[1]

(*b*) In the second place, what occurs, is the practical enforcement of this aggregate will, in every expression of it, by the aggregate force of society; the execution, that is, of the law; society executing its purposes, and striving to secure its ends. Here, as in the preceding instance, it is wholly immaterial, in the nature of the case, in which one of innumerable ways, these determinations of the aggregate, or predominating will, are executed under the aggregate, public force. It may be by an armed force, directed by a despot, or by the force of opinion amongst a few people—or by any of the countless methods between these two. The fundamental principle is the same, in every manifestation: and the manifestation itself is the expression of the second one of these necessities, operations, forces,

[1] Jer., xxxi. 31–34.

which are developed by the organization of society, and without which the very idea of society disappears.

(*c*) In the third place, the aggregate justice, rectitude, of society appears in the form of interpreting, applying, and administering the public will, in the innumerable applications of it, to all the varied exigencies of individuals and of society. This is what we call the judicial exposition and enforcement, in civil society, of all public and private rights and duties, which are regulated by what we call law ; which it appertains to what we call the executive power, to take care that it is obeyed. Here, as in both the previous instances, the method is nothing, as regards the nature of the case. It is the principle, which is of unalterable certainty and necessity ; and which is the third and final necessity, operation, force, which results out of every possible form of government, and without which none can exist or act.

3. Now it is wholly indifferent, as matter of mere science, whether the permanent functions of all government, are divided and exercised by separate bodies of magistracy—or united and all exercised by a single person. Such questions are fundamental in determining the particular character of the government ; but irrelevant to the question of the inherent nature of government itself. And we might content ourselves with remarking that these are the ordinary powers, legislative, judicial, and executive, with which they are familiar who live under free constitutions, but which our oppressed race has been so slow to comprehend. But what is now insisted on is, that they are all inherent in the very nature of the social state—and that for all the purposes of the existence and operation of society, they present an exhaustive statement of its possible functions. Then follows the decisive conclusion, as to their use in this place : the indestructible foundation of them all lies in the very nature of man. The first function is the result of man's natural sense of right and wrong—his moral nature developed in union with his fellow-men, in settling rules of rectitude, which he calls law—the public will. The last function is the result of man's natural sense of truth and falsehood—his rational nature developed in union with his fellow-men, in determining the true and the right, under established rules ; that is, truly applying in practice what had been already declared to be right. The middle function is

the result of man's free and active nature, developed in union with his fellow-men, in enforcing, by the general will, the general sense of the right and the true. Conscience, Reason, Will: these are the grand characteristics of man's moral, rational, and spiritual nature—itself a faint image and likeness of the living God. Legislative, judicial, executive: these are the grand functions of society—which, under whatever form, can be considered in its fundamental nature, as nothing else than an organized development of man—ordained by God; and so, in a certain sense, an image and likeness, in the second degree, of the nature of God, as the great Lawgiver, Judge, and Ruler of the universe.

4. These principles are just as true and effective with regard to the visible Church of Christ, as with regard to any other organized society of human beings. All ignorance, abuse, or misuse of them, as inevitably works spiritual injury to it, as a similar procedure works temporal injury to civil society: while it may no more certainly destroy the particular portion of the Church so misguided or misorganized, than similar conduct may destroy a State. But in the application of these principles, the Church of Christ is placed in circumstances altogether peculiar, the just observance of which does involve her very existence. Nor do I speak now, particularly, of one form of Church government as compared with another; but, as I have done all along, of the fundamental principles of all authority in the Church of Christ. In all communities that which is good and true, is obligatory upon them by the law of nature, as the rule whereby they should exercise every function of society; and it is because all communities are constituted of persons who are naturally depraved, that the law of nature is ever transgressed by authority of the State. As soon as the God of nature, restates the law of nature by way of a divine Revelation, and adds thereto a new and better way of life for fallen men; all communities, which come to the knowledge of this divine rule of what is good and true, are bound to observe it in the exercise of every function of the State. I say all communities are so bound—each in its place and according to the special ends of its existence; because I have proved elsewhere, that they exist by the ordination of God—and I have just now explained how, in their very existence and operation, they demonstrate the creative, the providential, and the gracious dominion of God. Throughout all ages, the civil State and the

Church of God have been developed, side by side—not indeed among all peoples—but among all where God had a people. From the call of Abraham to the establishment of the Institutions of Moses, there seems to have been little distinction between the two. From the establishment of those Institutions to the erection of the Gospel Church State, the distinction between the two was made as exact as the union was close. It is under that Gospel Church State, that the union between them has been dissevered—and each assigned to its proper sphere ; one as the ordinance of God for the temporal benefit of man, the other as the ordinance of God for the eternal salvation of sinners ; one fitted to be universal, the other obliged by its very nature to ground itself, in some degree, on whatever is local, peculiar, distinctive, personal. Of necessity, and in every way, therefore, the law of God, and the person of Christ, have a relation to the functions of the visible Church, different from the relation of both to the civil State. It is this which remains to be explained.

5. I have proved in a previous chapter, that the word of God contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only infallible rule of all that God requires of man, and all that man ought to believe concerning God. I have also proved that the gathering and perfecting of the saints of God, in this life, to the end of the world, is the great immediate object of the organization and continued existence of the visible Church on earth. It follows that the word of God is not only the supreme, but the exclusive law of his Church ; the whole function of determining what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad—the whole power of making *law* in its proper sense, and for the proper ends of her existence—much less for other ends—being swallowed up and exhausted in her joyful and complete acceptance of God as her Lawgiver, and his laws as hers. There are other lines of argument by which this same conclusion is very variously established ; I content myself with remarking, that the express command of God himself crowns and settles all. The absolute sufficiency of the sacred Scriptures, is the fundamental principle of the Reformed religion—in other words of Christianity itself. Every addition to them, and every subtraction from them, which the visible Church, or any portion of it, may dare to attempt ; is a usurpation of the prerogative of God, an

attack upon the Mediatorial office of Christ, and an outrage at once upon the freedom and the conscience of the saints.[1]

6. Accepting, therefore, the law of God—the functions which remain to the organized Church, considered as a visible, but divine Institute; are the true interpretation and application, and the faithful administration and execution of all that blessed truth, of which her Lord has made her, the pillar and the ground. While her whole power is thus limited with relation to the Law of God, her judicial and executive power, like that of every society; limited to the exposition and enforcement of such law as is peculiar to them, or common to all societies, in her, is limited exclusively to the law of God. For the law of God appertains to her, to her nature, and to her ends; to expound it, and to enforce it, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints—is her business on earth. Considered simply as God's Kingdom, there is no other law which appertains to her; and, therefore, there is no other with which she may meddle, either to expound it, or to enforce it. Acting always in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ—uttering always the mind of God as made known to her through his word and Spirit—having no end but the glory of God in the salvation of fallen men; it is God's Kingdom in this ruined world, made visible as the Church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—and now militant in its Gospel State.

7. We may therefore define that the Church visible of Christ, is the Kingdom of God in this world, created through the communion of saints, developed externally through principles inherent in human nature and common to other societies, possessed of a peculiar and divinely appointed organization, separate from the world, and so a divine institute among men: that all the members of it, are members of Jesus Christ, its Lord and Head, whose Body it is—the infallible rule of whose faith and practice is the revealed will of God—to expound and apply, to administer and enforce which, are its sole functions as a government separate from the world—the scope of all its powers, being the scope of its own end, is exclusively spiritual, and exclusively directed to the gathering and perfecting of the saints, who are lost sinners saved by grace.

[1] Gal., i. 8, 9; 2 Tim., iii. 14–17; Deut. iv. 1, 2; Rev., xxii. 18, 19.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE FREEDOM OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH, CONSIDERED IN ITS INDEPENDENCE OF THE STATE, AND ITS CONSECRATION TO CHRIST.

I. 1. The Family, the State, and the Church: Their Relation to Human Nature, and to God.—2. The Impossibility of either of them supplying the place of any other.—3. Relation of Christian Duty to the Commonwealth.—4. Tendency of Society to engulph the Church in the State: Certainty and Nature of the Retribution.—5. Results of the Union of the Church and the State.—6. Their distinct Nature and separate Mission: Their mutual Relation and Duty.—7. Fundamental Necessity of the Spiritual Independence of the Church.—8. Absolute Impossibility of confounding the True Church and the Civil Power: Distinction between the inward and outward Freedom of the Church.—II. 1. Relation of the Glorified Redeemer to the Visible Church, and her Relation to Him.—2. Infinite Dominion of Christ, and unspeakable Freedom and Blessedness of the Church therein:—(*a*) The Head of the Church, head over all things:—(*b*) The Church the Purchase of his Blood:—(*c*) She Chosen in Him—chooses Him as her only Lord:—(*d*) His Worthiness to possess, and Competency to execute, boundless and everlasting Authority:—(*e*) In Him dwelleth all Fulness:—(*f*) By Him, are all eternal Retributions.—3. The Crown of the Redeemer as exclusively his, as his Cross.—4. The Root of our inward Freedom.—5. Consecration of the Church to Christ, her true Freedom.—6. Nature of this Freedom.—7. Condition of the Visible Church, when possessed of it.—8. Relation of all States to Christ's Free Church.

I.—1. When we have considered man as an individual being, and then considered him under the various social aspects in which he is united with his fellow-creatures; there remains nothing which concerns his nature, his development, or his duty, which may not have been subjected to our scrutiny. For there is no position in which man can be contemplated, which does not become distinct under one or other of these points of view. I have attempted in the early part of the previous Treatise to analyze what may be called the social possibilities of human nature, as a necessary part of the demonstration of the total and universal depravity of the race. The result reached was, that all the social relations which have been ordained and regulated by God, and of which human nature appears to be capable, are embraced

under the institutions of the family, the State, and the Church; these three institutions, and none besides, appearing to be unavoidable under the scheme of creation, providence, and grace, known to us; and, at the same time, to exhaust the social capabilities and satisfy the social necessities of human nature, in its present condition. In order to the analysis and demonstration which it was necessary to attempt, neither of these social institutions was required to assume any particular form, out of the innumerable forms in which all of them have existed, or might be supposed to exist. What was to be shown was, the social capabilities and wants of human nature, concurring with the ordination of God, and uniformly producing the organization of families, of civil communities, and of religions—however perfect or imperfect they might be supposed to be; by means of the whole of which, and by no other means, those social capabilities and wants are completely exhausted and satisfied. This is the result on the side of Philosophy—illustrating the course of divine Providence towards man, and confirming the perpetual teaching of God's word, that these, and only these, are the social institutions which belong to human nature in its present condition, and which have been ordained by the Creator and Ruler of the universe.

2. It follows, that neither of these institutions can discharge the functions which are peculiar to either of the others; and that neither of them can encroach upon the proper domain of any other, without jeoparding the highest interests of man, and at the same time attempting to disorder the course of divine Providence, and to set at naught the revealed ordinations of God. If it were possible to obliterate the sense of religion in the human soul, we should become a race of fiends. If it were possible to annihilate the irresistible tendency in man to a state of society, mankind would be exterminated by mutual violence, unless want, and pestilence, and beasts of prey, anticipated the savage work. If it were possible to extinguish the parental, the filial, the fraternal, the marital affections and instincts of our race—its continued existence would be impossible. It is by means of these profound and enduring elements of our nature, that our race has been found capable not only of existing, but of making progress, under conditions which would seem capable of overwhelming it with ruin and despair.

3. Civil society, then, is by divine appointment—and the commonwealth is an ordinance of God. The magistrate is, in his place, the servant of God.[1] Obedience to the laws of the land in which we dwell, loyalty to the community of which we are members, zeal for the advancement of the commonwealth to which we belong, are not only obligations of natural religion, and high impulses of nature herself; they are explicit duties of revealed religion, enjoined by God. But, like all other relative duties, they are neither exclusive nor absolute; but are bounded and regulated by other duties of equal dignity; and are liable, on one hand to be greatly strengthened, and on the other to be even effaced, by coincidence or by conflict with duties more exalted than themselves.

4. Nothing in the history of society, is more remarkable than the strength of that tendency to confound and identify its civil and religious institutions, which has manifested itself in all ages. And yet from the moment that the tribal form of society was superseded, by what may be properly called the State, and the Church became visible and separate; nothing would be more illogical, and nothing has been more disastrous. When God organized his ancient people under a form of administration immediately theocratical, not only did he keep the functions of the Church and those of the commonwealth distinct; but he rendered their union impossible—and secured the freedom of both—by making one tribe royal, and another priestly. Yet mankind, imbued with a deep instinct of the divine origin of society, while they apprehended vaguely its true principles; overlooked the divine ordination of its separate organization for its special and limited ends, and engulphed under the one ruling idea of the State, every interest of man, personal and public, temporal and eternal. However great may be the error of denying the divine authority of civil society; the error is equally great that swallows up the individual—the household—and the Church—and leaves to man nothing positive but the State—and no distinct relation but that of citizen, or subject, or slave, as the case may be. The social instincts of man, not less powerful in their religious than in their civil tendencies, might be expected to seek a terrible retribution; and they were taught the way, both by the spirit and the method to which governments were prone. The

[1] Matt., xxii. 15–22; Rom., xiii. 1–7.

long and bloody career of the Latin or Roman Apostacy in the bosom of the last of the prophetic universal world-powers; and that of the successors of Mohammed in the bosom of the three preceding universal monarchies; have exhibited examples of this tendency to engulph all in the idea of the Church, more tenacious and more frightful, than were ever exhibited by the opposite tendency to engulph all in the idea of the State.

5. Supposing the visible Church to exist in such a union with the civil power, that the distinctness and freedom of each, with respect to the other, are lost; then, one or other out of a few clearly appreciable results, seems to be theoretically inevitable—and is historically certain. The civil power enslaves the Church; or the Church enslaves the State: or there are endless conflicts between the two, with perpetual alternations of mutual dominion. A fourth result may be imagined—but it has never been attained, and cannot be; namely, the concurrent action of both under the condition just stated, with a perfect mutual observance and freedom of the functions, duties and rights of each. This cannot be. The two institutions—though both are based in the very nature of man, and both are manifested through principles fundamental in that nature, and both enter into that vast concatenation by which God is manifested in all things;—yet in their scope, and end, and means, and sanctions, are utterly different from each other. No State has existed in which the true followers of the Lord, were even numerically coincident with the members of the civil community. Even in the Jewish commonwealth, when the union between the visible Church and the civil institutions was in many respects so close, the distinction between the two was, as I have shown, complete; while it was one great part of the mission of the Apostles of the Lord to transform the visible Church from its close, and ritual, and legal form, into its open, and free, and Gospel form.[1]

6. The Church of Christ, though in the world, is not of it.[2] The Kingdoms of this world are exclusively, both in it, and of it.[3] The children of the Lord may be citizens, or subjects of the State; and the rulers and magistrates of all States may be heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven; and the institutions and laws of all

[1] Matt., xxviii. 18–20; xvi. 13–20; xviii. 18; John, xx. 19–23; 1 Cor., v. 4.

[2] John, xviii. 36; vi. 15; Daniel, ii. 44; vii. 9–14.

[3] Mark, xii. 13–17; Rom., xiii. 1–7.

communities ought to be made and administered in the fear of God. It is, no doubt, the special duty of the Church, to have in constant remembrance before God, all who are in authority ;[1] and it is their special duty to be nursing fathers and nursing mothers to the Israel of God.[2] The State is for things temporal, things local, things visible and transitory ; none of which we brought with us into this world—none of which shall we take with us when we leave it—none of which, while they endure are able to save our souls, or separate them from the love of God. Great as are the blessings it is capable of bestowing, so far is it from being possible that the political millennium for which men look, can be secured by any temporal organization of society ; that the end of all the Kingdoms of this world is, that they shall be broken in pieces and consumed, and become the Kingdom of our Lord and his Christ ; and he shall reign forever and ever.[3] In that spiritual Kingdom manifested in the Visible Church, and whose true seat is within us, neither time, nor place, nor condition, nor race has any vital significance ; nor can flesh and blood inherit it ; nor does anything avail but the new creature. Its union with the civil power is the highest aggravation of confounding it with the world—for the State is the highest form in which the world appears. So that neither the Visible Church, nor the civil power, can have any duty either towards God or itself, or each other, more clear and transcendent, than that each should confine itself with respect to the other, to its own obvious sphere—each regarding the other as the ordinance of the common father and God of both. Let the Church so act, that the State ordained of God, may protect and nourish her as the Bride of the Lamb : let the State so act, that the Church ordained of God, may reverence and obey her as the minister of God on earth.

7. This spiritual independence of the Kingdom of God in this world, is a necessity so fundamental, that no portion of the Visible Church has surrendered it, without surrendering in an equal degree, the spirit of its divine vocation. And all corrupt Churches which have sought the closest union with the civil power, have done so, not in order to submit themselves to the dominion of the State, but rather to subject it to a tyranny as

[1] 1 Tim., ii. 1–4.

[2] Isaiah, xlix. 22, 23.

[3] Rev., xi. 14 ; Daniel, ii. 35, 44.

relentless as that, which they made it the instrument of inflicting. To plead for the freedom of the Church is, therefore, to plead, at the same time, for the independence of States, and for the security of mankind against the cruelties of all false religions. If the Church of God had conferred on mankind no other boon, than to disseminate throughout the earth, and to settle in the depths of the human soul the sublime truth, that in Christ Jesus there is a law, separate from all other laws, and higher far than they; that in him there is a power, distinct from and more enduring than all power besides; she would have bestowed on our suffering race, a source of consolation capable of sustaining it through all its sorrows, an instrument of deliverance competent to the overthrow of all its oppressors, an assured means of victory—temporal and spiritual—efficacious at last for the destruction of those who have destroyed the earth. In those blessed lands—where this great truth is the common inheritance, the Church of God ought to beware how she so walks in the light of it, that all peoples may see—and live.

8. In point of absolute truth, however the State and the Church may deprave each other—yet the confusion of the two as now ordained by God—or the complete subjection of either to the other—before one or both are wholly perverted—is really, and in a strict sense, impossible. And the impossibility results so completely from the absolute nature of both those divine institutions—that the final glory of the Kingdom of God, will be exhibited towards the Kingdoms of this world—as I have already shown—not in that they will be subjected to it, but in that their mission being ended, they will pass utterly away. In the meantime, innumerable evils are engendered, and countless injuries are inflicted on humanity, and on the cause of Christ—by the corruption of the professed people of God—by the oppression of his true children—and by the general demoralization of mankind; through perpetual attempts to accomplish that which in its very nature cannot occur, so as to leave both to the State and to the Church its true spirit, and its real nature. The fundamental conditions of the visible Kingdom of God being, its separation from the world and its spiritual freedom—both of which are impossible as long as it is confounded with the State—no matter whether the State is subject to it, or it is subject to the State; all that remains in that calamitous estate of the Church—is the

inward freedom which every member of Christ possesses, and must vindicate in order to be a member of the Kingdom of the First Born whose names are written in heaven. When the outward freedom of the visible Church is gone—this true inward freedom of God's people may still exist in its highest perfection.[1] Nay this condition of the Church—when brought about by the persecution of the State, is so far from being impossible or unusual, that it is that in which it has ordinarily existed: and so far is it from being helpless, that it has proved to be one of mighty power. Nevertheless, it is no more the mission of the Church to court persecution, than to shrink from it. Her normal condition is that, on the one side, of spiritual freedom, and independence of the State—which I have thus far attempted to exhibit; and, on the other, that of absolute consecration to the Lord Jesus Christ—which remains to be considered.

II.—1. Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, said Peter in the name of all the Apostles, on the day of Pentecost, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.[2] We are his witnesses, he and they all added not long afterward to the council of the Jews,—and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him, that the God of our fathers hath raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree, and hath exalted him with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.[3] John, in his vision of him whose name is called the *Word of God*, and who was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, saw upon that vesture, and upon his thigh, a name written—*King of kings and Lord of lords;* and all the armies which are in heaven followed him.[4] And Paul declares that God has not only raised up Christ from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; but that he hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.[5] And the risen Saviour proclaimed to his Apostles, in the most emphatic manner, and

[1] Gal., v. 1; John, viii. 32; Rom., vi. 18; 1 Peter, ii. 15, 16.
[2] Acts, ii. 36.
[3] Acts, v. 29–32.
[4] Rev., xix. 13–16.
[5] Eph., i. 20–23.

as part of his last charge to them concerning his Kingdom,—All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.[1] Him, therefore, the Church of the living and true God accepts as the one Lord Jesus Christ,[2] her sole Foundation[3]—Husband[4]—Head[5]—and King.[6]

2. If we would but consider in how many and how decisive points of view the Scriptures place this absolute right and dominion of the Lord Jesus over his Church; and his infinite fitness to possess them, and his infinite faithfulness in the execution of them, and the unspeakable freedom and blessedness of his people therein; we should perceive clearly how deeply our salvation, and the glory of God in the whole work of his redeeming love, are staked on the matter we are now examining. Let me suggest a few particulars.

(*a*) As Mediator Christ is invested with all power in heaven and in earth: as Head of his Church he is Head over all things, with unlimited dominion and lordship over them all.[7]

(*b*) Christ has purchased the Church with his own blood, that it might be unto him a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people—showing forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.[8]

(*c*) That Church, chosen in him—has with unanimous and unfaltering voice and consent of every heir of God, chosen and declared the Lord Jesus to be its Lawgiver, Ruler, Judge, and Saviour; whose glory as such, is above the heavens, and whose infinite exaltation as her Lord, every tongue will at last confess.[9]

(*d*) Nor is there anything wanting in him, to make him worthy to possess and competent to exercise this boundless dominion—since it is he which searcheth the reins and hearts, and giveth to every one according to his works—he by whom God shall judge the secrets of men, according to the Gospel.[10]

(*e*) In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of

[1] Matt., xxviii. 18. [2] 1 Cor., viii. 6. [3] 1 Cor., iii. 11.
[4] 2 Cor., xi. 2. [5] Eph., i. 22. [6] Psalm ii. 6.
[7] Matt., xxviii. 18; Eph., i. 22; Phil., i. 9–11.
[8] Acts, xx. 28; 1 Pet., ii. 9, 10.
[9] Isaiah, xxxiii. 22; Psalm viii. 1, 10; Phil., ii. 9–11.
[10] Rev., ii. 23; Rom., ii. 16.

knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, rest immeasurably upon him.[1]

(*f*) It is before his judgment bar that we must all appear, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad ; whereof God hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.[2]

3. What less can we say to these things, than that the crown and Kingdom of Jesus Christ appertain to him as exclusively as his cross? He alone is King in Zion—as really as he alone is the Redeemer of Israel. By the eternal purpose of Jehovah—by the unalterable covenant between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—by the purchase of his own most precious blood—by the ratification of his work by the Father in the infinite exaltation of the glorified Redeemer—by the ratification of his work by the Holy Ghost in his unbroken testimony to Christ—by the willing obedience and joyful suffrage of every heir of eternal life—by his own glorious fitness to rule over and in the Kingdom of God—by his infinite power, and wisdom, and justice in the final judgment of the quick and the dead—by the unsearchable fulness out of which he bestows on his brethren a weight of glory which no heart can conceive, and upon his enemies tribulation and anguish beyond their wildest fears :—by rights and prerogatives so immense, so accumulated, so overwhelming—he is the King, the Lawgiver, the Judge, the Lord in Zion !

4. It is precisely in this absolute and exclusive headship of Christ, and the consecration of his Church to him responsive thereto, that the root of her inward freedom lies ; just as it is on her entire separation from the world, that her outward freedom is grounded, and can be made manifest. Nor is the doctrine of her inward freedom barren—any more than that of her outward freedom. Nay, this is before the other : necessarily before it in the order of her life—immeasurably before it in the power of its operation. For without this inward freedom there is no Church of God, to which that outward freedom can appertain. Wherever Christ reigns in the human soul, there the Kingdom of God is set up, even though men and states recognize it only to reject and oppress it. The Kingdom cometh not with observation : it

[1] Col., ii. 3; Isaiah, xi. 2.

[2] 2 Cor., v. 10; Acts, xvii. 31.

is within us—and is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.[1]

5. The manner in which we are personally made free by Christ, has been fully and carefully explained, and the whole process of our deliverance traced. Considering all those who are delivered by Christ as united in the fellowship of saints, and conducted into the glorious liberty wherewith Christ makes his whole people free; we have before us that great company of the redeemed, which is the City of God.[2] Their individual freedom is the result of their personal union with Christ; the aggregate freedom of the whole is the result of Christ's headship over his Church. Their individual consecration to Christ as their Saviour, is the clearest manifestation of their personal deliverance by him: their public and organic consecration to him as their only King and Head, is the clearest proof of the organic freedom of the Church.

6. These divine realities are developed in a way, at once distinct and irresistible. The mode of our being and the character of our nature, alike render it impossible for us to exist, in any independent and irresponsible condition—which we might choose, in our folly, to dignify with the name of freedom, and which we might imagine was attainable and to be desired. We have no freedom—and can have none—which can deliver us from God, and from nature, and make us independent of those ever-living forces of reason, morality, and providence, which operate within and around us, and amidst which, as a part of them, and not as irrespective of them, we are borne onward to our destiny. We may perish—or we may be saved by Christ: besides which, there is no alternative. We are already under the law and the bondage of sin and death: and from this condition nothing but the law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, can make us free.[3] In this condition the blood of Christ is efficaciously applied to our souls. The infinite dominion of the Son of God, which pervades the universe with absolute completeness and perfection, becomes unspeakably merciful and loving towards us, and supersedes in us every other dominion. The divine agency by which it acts—even that of the Holy Ghost—is infinitely pure, gentle, ennobling,

[1] Luke, xvii. 20, 21; Rom., xiv. 17, 18.

[2] Psalm xlviii. *passim;* Rev., iii. 12; xxi. *passim;* Gal., iv. 22–31.

[3] Rom., viii. 2.

and efficacious; and the divine truth through which it works, quick and powerful as a two-edged sword, is also sweet, and purifying, and healing, as the balm that is in Gilead. And the company of the Lord's redeemed, who walk in white bearing the symbols of victory, are round about us, every one a monument like ourself of divine grace and glory. Now, is this bondage——or is it deliverance?

7. Freedom of the human conscience from all control but that of God—freedom of the human reason from all authority but that of truth—freedom of the human will from all dominion but that of the Ruler of the universe—freedom of the human soul from all subjection but that to its Creator and Redeemer: add to all this majestic freedom—the freedom to use it all—freely for all good! This is the feeble expression of that spiritual condition proposed to the Church of the living God—and for which the Spirit of God is able to prepare her. This is the true condition, inadequately expressed, of the visible Church of Christ, which in its free action separates itself more and more from the world, and solicits from all States a complete separation from them, in all her spiritual life and movement. This is the result of the supreme and exclusive headship of the glorified Redeemer, to which the perfect consecration of his Church to him—is her responsive act. It is a freedom of which none are worthy—to which none are competent—unto which none can attain—but the Bride of the Lamb! As to her, the more perfectly her will is swallowed up in the will of God, the more complete her freedom is. The more entirely God's truth obtains possession of her mind and heart, the more thoroughly does that truth make her free. The more constant and pervading the power of God's Spirit within her is, the more assured and enlarged is the liberty of her service and her love. And as to every dependent creature—fallen and renewed by grace—this is the only form of spiritual freedom offered to them by God, or of which their fallen nature is capable. It is the form in which our Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.[1]

8. The present enquiry does not lead us to the particular consideration of the duty of the State, as a divine institute, and that of the civil magistrate, as in his office a servant of God. It may

[1] 2 Tim., i. 7–10.

be observed, however, that the separate ordination of States, is very far from releasing them from the duty of piety towards God —from the open recognition of their position, as powers established by him and responsible to him—or from the obligation to respect and protect every other institute ordained by him.[1] The obligation resting on the State to take note of the Church of God, is in its nature very similar to that resting on the Church to take note of the State ; the duty of acting righteously in the sphere assigned by God, is as clear with respect to one as to the other ; and the certainty of God's favour, or his displeasure, is equally absolute and efficacious, with respect to both. The God of the Christian is the only God. His dominion extends to all things—his providence directs all things—his will is the rule by which all things are determined. All peoples, all States, all rulers—all that exists, in every relation in which it exists, is his: and so the whole universe is his. For his own glory he created all things : for that, he sustains and governs all. The humblest creature is not beneath his regard—and the most exalted is as nothing before his wrath. Whoever imagines that kindnesses or injuries done to the least of his children—are forgotten by him, knows nothing of him. And the kings of the earth who set themselves, and the rulers who take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed ; ought to know that he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh—that the Lord shall have them in derision.[2]

[1] Prov., viii. 15, 16; Psalm lxxxii. 3, 4; 2 Sam., xxiii. 3; Rom., xiii. 1–8.

[2] Psalm ii. 2, 4; Matt., xxv. 31–46.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE HISTORICAL, LOGICAL, AND SUPERNATURAL ELEMENTS OF THE CHURCH: CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO THE MARKS OF THE TRUE CHURCH.

I. 1. Posture of the General Exposition: Marks of the True Church.—2. Elements of the Question of the True Church.—II. 1. The Historical Element: The Sacred Scriptures excluded from this Element.—2. Uninspired History of the Church: Nature and Influence thereof.—3. General Career of the early Gospel Church: Its Fate in the East: The Latin and the Greek Churches and Empires.—4. Career of the Gospel Church, and of the Latin Church, in the West—till our Times.—III. 1. The Logical Element: Stated and explained.—2. Its Force when directed by Divine Grace.—3. Sympathy between the inward and outward Life of the Church: Unity through all Generations.—IV. 1. Supernatural Element: Its Vital Supremacy.—2. The total Abnegation of Identity between the Gospel Church, and every Institution, real or possible.—3. Positive Exposition of it, Supernaturally Considered.—V. 1. Infallible Certainty concerning the True Church.—2. All possible Forms of the elemental Idea of Religion, reducible to three: These stated.—3. The First Class reject the Revelation of God: They cannot be the Church of Christ.—4. The Second abuse and pervert that Revelation: Precision of the Rule of Judging them.—5. The Third are the result, and expression, of that Revelation: Their Glory and Blessedness.—VI. 1. Recognition of the Church Visible, universal.—2. Particular Marks distinctive of her: General Statement concerning them.—3. The two ultimate and opposite Foundations: Authority—Reason.

I.—1. I HAVE now traced, in the four preceding chapters, the Church of Christ as it may be considered in its fundamental idea and elemental principles—as it may be considered in its nature and end—as it may be considered as the universal Church visible—and as it may be considered with regard to that spiritual freedom which results from its complete consecration to Christ. It seems to me that this course of exposition brings the whole subject to a position in which we may say we have precise knowledge, and therefore have clear and just views, touching a matter at once unspeakably vast and important. What would follow, if we lived in the first age of the Church, would be to sum up and apply the knowledge thus obtained, to the designation of those universal marks of the divine Kingdom thus displayed, whereby it might

be infallibly distinguished. We live, however, not in the first, but in the nineteenth age of the Church. And all the intervening ages have claims greater or less upon our consideration; and all the permanent effects which their terrible convulsions and vicissitudes, may be supposed to have produced upon these great questions, require some line to be clearly drawn through them, whereby we may walk in confidence. Before attempting, therefore, to point out those infallible marks of the true Church to which I have alluded, it seems necessary to explain carefully, but generally, those great principles and truths, to the test of which all the past, with all its influences, must submit; and in the presence of which, the true position of every age, as it exists, becomes equally distinct.

2. There are united in the very fabric of the Church, three elements, distinct but closely allied as they come to us, all of which we must appreciate, in order to comprehend fully the aspect she ought now to present, and to render truly our decision upon the marks that determine her very existence. These are the historical, the logical, and the supernatural elements which enter into the question of the Church. Of these the last, is the transcendent element: the second is next to it in importance, but far below it: and the first, instead of being the chief, as is so often asserted, really derives all its importance, since the close of the canon of inspired books and the death of the last inspired man, from the light it imparts to the other two, by showing us how they have affected man, and how he has abused them. I will consider each in its order as briefly as possible; observing that the necessity of any such consideration, and even of any precise determination of the marks of the true Church, rests, on one side, on the certainty that there is such a Church on earth, and on the other side, on the certainty that fidelity to Christ and to our own soul, renders it impossible to allow, without examination, any claim, by any organization, that it is that Church.

II.—1. I exclude from the historical element of the Church, all its inspired history, all the narrative portion of the sacred Scriptures; for all this is an essential part of its supernatural element—what God said he did, being as really divine as anything else he said—and the inspired narrative of what he did being obligatory upon us as expounding his revealed will, and

not to be considered as simply explaining the course of events. The Church is delivered to us by Revelation in its Gospel state —the state in which it should exist by divine appointment, and the Revelation of which is addressed to man and cognizable by man. Whatever history it had before, is written by God: whatever development, was by divine authority, was under the Covenant of Grace, and terminated with the Apostles of the Lord. That the steps of its previous development had been numerous and distinct—all progressive, each emerging from the bosom of its immediately preceding state, and conducting directly to its immediately succeeding state; all this proves clearly that we must accept the common result of all, as the Church of Christ; but proves, also, that further progress and development of the same description, so far from being normal to the Church—are impossible in the absence of that immediate authority of God, attested by miracles and revelation, which had attended all its previous changes. Add to this the express and repeated declaration of God, that the Gospel Church is the last dispensation of his grace directed to the salvation of sinners, and that the second coming of the Son of Man is the next manifestation of his Kingdom; and the demonstration is complete that the Apostolic Church, and not a Church developed beyond it, is still the true Church of Christ.

2. Whatever, therefore, the uninspired history of the Gospel Church, during her progress, her convulsions, and her vicissitudes for nineteen centuries, may deliver to this generation; must, as regards its value as an elemental part of the question of the Church, sink very low in comparison with the supernatural element of it: and must submit whatever value it may really possess to the severe scrutiny of the logical element of the great question. What God has ordained his Church to be, and what the human soul enlightened by divine truth, perceives from her nature and end that she should be; may derive a certain confirmation to us from the fact, that historically that is what she is, and has been. And our judgment may, to a certain extent, be influenced by her free and common judgment, maintained through all ages, as to what the ordination of God is, and as to what her own nature and end oblige her to be. But it is only of the true Church of Christ, that such statements can be made: for the history which has been enacted, and the judgments which

have been uttered, by dead heretics and schismatics, dead persecutors and oppressors, dead seducers and corrupters, are of no more authority to us, than they were to those saints whose blood they shed. When we attempt to appreciate the value of the historical element of the question of the Church, we must be careful not to deceive ourselves, by allowing the corrupters of the truth and the oppressors of the earth, to speak in the name of the Bride of the Lamb, whom these very despisers of the cross of Christ have driven into the wilderness during two-thirds of her pilgrimage, and would have destroyed utterly, if God had permitted them. Nor must we allow ourselves to forget, even when the Bride of the Lamb herself makes her voice audible through centuries of corruption and persecution, that she must speak by the same rule by which we must judge. We could not allow her, even if she desired it, to settle determinately, and for us, the significance of the elements of her own great question; without surrendering every claim which the Knowledge of God has, to be considered a science of positive truth. In effect, there has always been, and there is now, a true Church universal of the Lord Jesus Christ; and its history is the most important part of the history of mankind, since the days of the Apostles; and it gives us a determinate element in the great question of the true Church, chiefly as it sets before us to be scrutinized, the very thing we seek.

3. Christ's conception of his own Kingdom as exhibited in its members, and therefore called his Church, his Body, his Bride; was of a universal Kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy, into which men are divinely persuaded by teaching them eternal truth. From the earliest dawn of tradition, and the existence of the first powerful State among men, the human idea was the establishment of universal dominion by force; which has been realized four times in the history of mankind, in those four universal world-powers, of which various portions of the prophetic Scriptures, especially the book Daniel and the Revelation of St. John, give so remarkable an account. In the bosom of the last of these, the Gospel Church took its rise, when the set time had come. During all subsequent ages, it had its predicted course, first under the shadow, and then under the more baleful sunshine, of this vast power; till it was itself subverted, and the very idea of universal dominion, as a pure civil conception, was

lost amongst men. Then the Gospel Church continued its course towards its own predestinated triumph, in the midst of the prophetic Kingdoms into which that last subverted empire was rent. The Roman empire, and the visible Church already deeply corrupted, had both been torn asunder; and the Latin Church and empire, and the Greek Church and empire, at length divided the civilized world between them. In the latter arose the apostacy of Mohammed; in the former the apostacy of the Papacy. Both under the pretext of religion, and with the most formidable union of spiritual and civil power the world has seen, sought to prolong the existence in new and appalling forms, of universal world-power by force, directed against both the conscience and persons of men. To this day the Churches of the whole East remain under the yoke of Mohammedan superstition, or are sunken in spiritual deadness and defection. God has given to them no great awakening, no great reformation, during twelve hundred years; and in all those vast regions, it would be far easier to point out intolerable corruptions of Christianity, than to designate a true mark of the Church of Christ.

4. In the West the Latin Church and empire had a different career: and so had the true Church of Christ. From the days of Christ to those of Constantine the Great, the whole Church through three centuries of persecution, possessed, nevertheless, inward freedom, and filled the earth with the knowledge of the Lord. From Constantine to Pope Hildebrand, commonly known as Gregory VII., during about seven and a half centuries more, the Church of God passed through a period of constant declension and oppression, and at length of merciless persecution; and the Papacy from small beginnings in the city of Rome, gradually extended its dominion and its corruption, until it became the mistress of Europe, and sought to subject the whole world to its sway. From Hildebrand to Luther, during more than four additional centuries, the true Church of Christ is to be traced chiefly in the blood of its martyrs, and in the edicts of its oppressors; and the Papacy reigned with unlimited despotism throughout the Latin Church, and over the nations inhabiting the countries that composed the Latin empire. Twice before Luther, once in the eleventh century in the south of Europe, and once in the east of Europe in the fifteenth century, a Christian people had attempted, as did the Germans in the sixteenth century, to main-

tain against Rome, the right to love and serve the Lord: and in both cases, they were visited with protracted and exterminating war, and cut off with indiscriminate slaughter. From Luther's day to our own, during more than three additional centuries, the Church of Christ, restored to life by a miracle of divine grace, has passed through a ceaseless struggle, with the Papacy on the one hand, and with every form of unbelief and misbelief on the other. And now she stands before the same lost world, from which she has been so long separate, consecrated to the same Saviour who has always been her portion, appealing to his blessed word, and to her own nature and end, to confirm that historical claim to be the Bride of the Lamb, which has been the crown of her rejoicing through centuries of trial.

III.—1. The Church visible of God, in whatever light we consider it, has, like everything else that is subjected to our scrutiny, a logical element which it is impossible to omit, in every judgment we form concerning it. Everything that relates to that Church, considered as the Church visible and universal of the Lord Jesus Christ, distinguishes the question concerning it, as containing this logical element in a very high degree. The uninspired history of Christianity both in its purity and its corruption, demands, from its very nature, a more thorough scrutiny before any controlling influence can be allowed to it, than any history besides; whilst yet no permanent interest of mankind, remains more inadequately prepared for the scrutiny of any, but the learned, than this vast and diversified history. Moreover, the entire supernatural element, which is the controlling element in every question that relates to Christianity, cannot be accepted by man, much less so accepted as to satisfy it, without something to justify that profound conviction it demands. It is in the light of all we know, and all we are—the light of reason, of conscience, of philosophy, of the whole power we possess whether by nature or through grace, directed by all the knowledge we have obtained; that our meditations are to be directed to every serious question, and above all to questions relating to God and to duty. The ground of every decision is, in one respect, obliged to lie in the subject matter itself; and, therefore, as in all I have said, so emphatically here, nothing can be determined irrespective of its own nature and end—irrespective of its own logical element. Nor is it possible to determine anything against its own nature and end,

against its own logical element, without determining falsely. It would be wholly impossible to believe that a God of purity and truth, proposed to save sinners in their pollution, or by means of falsehood and cruelty: impossible to believe, that the saints of God have Satan for their Lord, instead of Christ: impossible to believe that to be a true Church, which by virtue of its faith, its life, and its worship, promotes sin instead of holiness. Rationally, it is not competent to man to say, that truth and falsehood are the same: ethically it is beyond his nature, to confound the distinction between good and evil: logically the concrete of all this is a controlling reality of his being—he cannot disregard the nature and end of things.

2. If we add to these great principles and truths, which are common to man, that which is peculiar to the children of God, we shall perceive how sure a foundation is laid in this logical element of the question of the Church, for a true decision concerning it. He who is born of the Spirit is able to discern the Kingdom of God,* and is fit to enter it.[1] That which is born of the Spirit is spirit, as really as that which is born of the flesh is flesh.[2] To know God, the living and true God, and to know Jesus Christ whom he has sent—this is eternal life.[3] The Son of God has given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ: this is the true God, and eternal life.[4] But this Saviour whom we know, is the way, the truth, and the life: and we know the truth, and the truth has made us free: and the Spirit of truth guides us into all truth.[5] And is it so, that they who are thus enlightened cannot discern the common mother of them all?[6] Is that spiritual insight which suffices to discern God, and Christ, and all truth, blind when it is turned toward the Spouse of Christ?[7] Are the very elect of God, whom it is impossible for false prophets, and even false Christs to deceive, incapable of distinguishing a ferocious harlot, from the faithful and beloved Bride—the Lamb's wife.[8] Then what we are expected to believe is, that he who ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, and who gave

* Δυναται ιδειν.

[1] John, iii. 3–6.
[2] John, i. 13; iii. 6; Titus, iii. 6.
[3] John, xvii. 3.
[4] 1 John, v. 20.
[5] John, viii. 32; xiv. 6; xvi. 13.
[6] Gal., iv. 26, 27.
[7] Song of Solomon, *passim*.
[8] Matt., xxiv. 24; Rev., xvii. *passim*; xxi. 9–27.

Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; gave them sufficient grace to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and to discern the one Spirit, the one hope of our calling, the one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all; but did not give them grace to discern the *one body* to which they were given: although he says he did, and names it first of all, in the very front of the wondrous array.[1]

3. Nor is this element of the question of the Church fully appreciated, until we reflect, that besides the force which its very existence implies, in distinguishing the true Church, the force of its own working makes every mark of the Church more and more distinct, while the absence of that working may be so absolute, as to destroy all evidence of the existence of the Church. Considered of herself, the sympathy between the inner and the outer life of the Church, is constant and profound; her spirit, her faith, her life, her form, all mutually and continually influencing each other. When she rose under the labours of the Apostles, she rose altogether; when she declined under the tyranny of Rome, she declined altogether; when she was restored to life under the labours of the Reformers, it was a restoration altogether; and every apostacy from her, has been an apostacy altogether. In proportion as each member is like Christ, all are like each other: in proportion as the Church is pure, she is identical in all generations. Her early Greek creeds and her still more numerous creeds of the Reformation—the former preceding the Apostacy of Rome, and the latter following by a thousand years, and renouncing that apostacy, are all expressive of the same unalterable faith. Nor is a less illustrious example of that invincible force and concatenation of sympathy between her inner and outer life, exhibited in all her endeavours to execute her true mission on earth. Her force in the world, and on it, has always been great in proportion to her separation from it, and feeble in proportion to the closeness of her connection with it: and her desire and fitness to execute her mission, have always risen and fallen with her ability to do so, as measured by her own complete organization, and vital activity, as Christ's Kingdom.

[1] Eph., iv. 3–13.

IV.—1. The supernatural element of the question of the Church, is the grand and controlling element in every aspect in which it is possible to present it. If we would obtain the fundamental idea of the Church, and the most elemental form of the principles which enter into that idea ; if we would rightly appreciate the nature and end of a Kingdom, organized upon that idea as an eternal witness for God ; if we would have a clear conception of the aspect, and form, and working of this Kingdom, with Christ at its head, the Spirit as its life, and regenerate men as its members ; if we would understand the necessity and the form of its real freedom, resulting from its being separate from the world and consecrated to the complete dominion of Christ : if this is what we desire to understand, we have, we can have, no alternative, but to sit down at the feet of Jesus and be taught by him. It is this which, in the four preceding chapters, I have endeavoured to prove and illustrate ; and in the widest sense of the truth implied in that method, it is this which pervades all I have written. Whether we consider God, or man, or the Mediator between them ; or salvation, or the truth which is available unto salvation, and that whether in its objective or subjective form ; or the individual sinner, or the race of sinners ; or the individual believer, or the whole elect of God, or the Kingdom of God composed of them, and that whether considered in its head the Lord Christ, or in its author the Holy Spirit, or in its members the children of God ; or whether we consider the Church visible, and that whether in the very elements of the question, or in the marks of the true Church—and that whether with reference to her faith, her life, her worship, or her form : the moment we shut our eyes to the supernatural element which not only pervades all, but determines all—there we extinguish light and hope together. The just live by faith ; the relation between life and righteousness, and the relation between both of them and faith—is divine, absolute, unalterable.[1] It is to the supernatural element in Christianity itself, as well as in the question of the visible Church by means of which Christianity presents a particular aspect, that both the other elements thereof are merely applied ; nay merely so applied, that we may the better comprehend its intimate nature, its practical operation, and its eternal design.

[1] Hab., ii. 1–4 ; Rom., i. 14–21 ; Gal., iii. 10–14 ; Heb., x. 35–39 ; John, iii. 16–21.

2. The Church of God is no longer manifested in a particular race, as under one aspect of the Abrahamic covenant: it is no longer identified with a particular State, or a particular nationality, as with the Jewish commonwealth and people. The truth, of which it is the pillar and ground, is for all the world; the Gospel which it proclaims, is for every creature; the repentance and remission of sins, which are preached in the name of Christ, are for all nations.[1] Nor is it a high, but spontaneous and necessary, development of the fallen religious nature of man, under fixed conditions; so many degraded forms of which heathenism presents to us. Nor is it a system created by human skill and thought, out of such elements as existing systems furnished, aided by such suggestions as reason, and passion, and natural religion might afford; of which we have examples in the system of Mohammedanism, and in that of the disciples of Confucius. Nor is it a fortuitous, or capricious, or traditional, or eclectic collection and arrangement of opinions, and speculations, and ideas, and theories; like the schools of the Oriental and the Greek philosophies. Nor is it a myth—springing from the efforts of the human mind to objectify, upon the traditions of the race, its own vague but powerful subjective life; and assuming the particular form in which we find it, by the development of the common life of the race. Nor is it a voluntary association of individuals, combined for particular purposes, governed by rules prescribed by themselves and perpetuated from generation to generation; of which so many and such varied examples have been furnished, in the progress of the human race. Nor is it even, like civil society, which it resembles most of all in some remarkable particulars which I have pointed out; a permanent and divine institution, of which God has laid down the elemental principles and obligations, and left to human choice, or to the course of events, to determine the particular form it may assume, and the particular direction it may take. The Gospel Church is none of these things. It is widely, divinely, different from them all. And in saying this it will be observed that the negations which have been made, exhaust the ordinary possibilities of human association, in a simple form; and yet they present few aspects which, in some age, have not been asserted, by those destitute of the truth, to be the true aspect of the Church of Christ.

[1] 1 Tim., iii. 15, 16; Mark, xvi. 15; Luke, xxiv. 47

3. Considered merely in its supernatural element, this is what it is. It is a permanent, universal, spiritual Kingdom, set up by God in this world; of which his Son Jesus Christ is the Lord, and Saviour, and head; of which the Holy Ghost is the life; and of which every member is chosen out of the human family, by God himself. All these members in all lands and ages, constitute one vast brotherhood, and perpetuate themselves through all time, disregardful of all things that would obstruct their vocation and their progress. They are united under the immediate authority of God, made manifest in his written word, and enforced by his divine Spirit; their outward organization being that prescribed in that word, and every act of authority being performed in the presence, and in the name, of the Saviour of the world. Every object to which the efforts of this body, thus organized and administered, may be directed; every doctrine it may accept; every duty which can devolve on it; all are laid down, explicitly or implicity, in the sacred Scriptures. The body itself and every member of it, is absolutely precluded from doing anything which God has forbidden, and from leaving undone anything which God has commanded; no matter at what risk, or loss, to themselves or others—no matter what ties are broken—or what authority subverted—by obedience to God. While all men, left to themselves, avoid and reject this absolute dominion of God; and while all who submit to it, do so only as they are made willing and able by the Spirit of God; it is, nevertheless, the immediate duty and right of every human being, to deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Jesus Christ in the regeneration; and it is the immediate object of this universal Church visible, to make known to every creature, his duty and his right in this particular—to urge every one with all importunity to flee from the wrath to come—and to teach every one with all diligence and love, the way of life eternal. This Church of God, is the great glory of God, in time and through eternity. In a world of sinners, it is vain to speak of a Church of God which contains no such element as this: vain to speak to sinners saved by grace, of any element paramount to this—or fit to be compared with it: vain to think of supplying its place—and yet saving lost souls.

V.—1. These elements of the question of the visible Church, appear to be exhaustive; and any just consideration of them to

place that question in a posture, where the marks of the true Church cannot fail to be always present with her, always so obvious that all may know her, and that her own children cannot mistake her. What those marks are in particular, or considered generally, every one who is enlightened in divine things, readily determines practically, and truly to his own satisfaction : nor can it, in any instance, affect the validity of the conclusion reached, that boundless variety of mental experience and exercises, occurs in the process by which the human soul reaches its conclusion upon this, any more than upon other questions of our spiritual life. Nevertheless, those marks of the true Church are capable of distinct classification and statement, under a few general heads —as I will attempt to show in the following chapters. And preliminary thereto, I will apply the foregoing analysis and exposition to the great question of all religions and Churches, for the purpose of clearing away all needless questions, and reducing the one we have to settle to its exact state.

2. I have already shown that the innumerable acts which are performed by public authority under every possible form of society, fall under a very few, namely three, great functions, which exhaust all the force which results from its organization—and supplies all that is possible, or even conceivable. It would be perfectly easy to show, in addition, that all the possible forms which organized society can assume, although they appear to be innumerable—are reducible to a very few ; besides which, in their simple exhibition and in the multiplied combinations of them, there is no possible, or imaginable, form of organized society. There is a form which is strictly popular and democratic ; there is a second which is strictly aristocratical ; there is a third which is strictly regal ; there is a fourth which is strictly republican and representative ; and there are innumerable combinations of the elements of these four forms. But nothing else is possible—until some unknown element heterogeneous to society, and, as regards human nature—either divine or diabolical—is introduced as a further modification ; and even then, it is the spirit more than the form that is affected. In like manner, the permanent forms which are possible, or conceivable, with relation to the idea of religion, even in its widest sense—are very limited in number, are capable of being precisely stated, and, following the nature of the subject, are less capable of serious admixture without

mutual destruction. However numerous and diversified the religions which have appeared among men, may be supposed to be—the following classes embrace them all.

(*a*) Those which, destitute of all true external revelation from God, are the product of the natural impulses of fallen man—and of his necessities manifested through his depraved religious susceptibilities.

(*b*) Those which are the product of the abuse and perversion of a true external revelation received from God.

(*c*) Those which are the product, the sum, and the expression, of all true external revelation received from God.

3. No one can doubt that all religions which fall under the first of these three classes, are to be indiscriminately and completely rejected, as no part of the Church visible universal of the Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever effect may be produced on man in this life, or in that which is to come, by any conceivable form of religion of that kind; it is perfectly manifest that no single effect, in either life, identical with any effect which the religion of Jesus was designed to produce, can be produced—or even desired, or contemplated by any of them. It is impossible, in the nature of the case, for the Christian religion to identify itself with any form of natural religion, or general morality—or speculative belief originating in that way—without forfeiting at once, every divine claim. Of systems of idolatry and superstition—of fraud and violence—of pollution, folly, and brutality—which have been accepted as religions amongst men; there is no occasion to speak here. So far is it from being possible to recognize, from the stand-point of the Christian Church, any system of religion originating in human nature, or wrought out by man in his own strength, as being competent for our guidance in this life, and for our eternal salvation; the necessary effect of the triumph of Christianity, is the total destruction of all such religions—the necessary effect of the regeneration of each soul, is its deliverance from every such delusion. At the very first step, therefore, of all enlightened attempts to identify the Church of Christ, and even before the exact settlement of the precise marks which infallibly distinguish it; the field of enquiry is swept of an overwhelming mass of refuges of lies.

4. Those religions which fall under the second class, require more consideration. The decision which ought to be formed in

each particular case, depends somewhat on the circumstances peculiar to each. The general principle is clear enough. For as the rejection of the true external revelation made by God to man, necessarily deprives men of all knowledge of a Saviour, and, therefore, excludes them from all communion with him ; so the abuse and perversion of that revelation, to the extent of depriving men of saving knowledge of Christ, also puts them out of the possibility of all communion with him. Nor is it at all material whether this terrible result is reached, by abusing and perverting God's revelation to man through human additions made to it—through rejection of additional revelations made by God—through voluntary ignorance of the way of life taught in the accepted revelation—through perverse misstatement of the truth divinely taught—through carnal deadness and indifference to it—through holding it in unrighteousness—or by whatever other means dishonouring God the Saviour, and concealing from lost men the light of life. In every such case, the just consideration of either element of the question of the Church, much more of all three—shows that none such can have the freedom of the city of God. The difficulty lies, not in the principles on which our decision ought to rest ; but in the uncertainty which may attach to the facts in each case, or in the conclusive significance of the facts when established. That is, it lies, not in the supernatural, but in the historical, or logical element of the question. For it is not true that every abuse and every perversion of the word of God—even though it should be such as to be permanent, and characteristic—justifies us in calling a Church corrupt, much less apostate ; any more than that individual Christians whose faith is very weak, or even erroneous on many points—or whose lives may come greatly short of the Gospel standard, are to be cast out as the children of the wicked one.[1] The most remarkable examples, perhaps, which the history of the Church affords, of the abuse and perversion of the revelation of God, are those furnished by the Jewish and Papal Churches. And while it is perfectly clear that neither of them can be considered any part of the visible Church of Christ ; it is very remarkable to observe the difference in God's providential dealings towards them, and in the whole tenor of his word respecting them. Let it be noted that whatever practical difficulty may exist arises only on the

[1] Isaiah, xl. 9–11 ; Eph., iv. 1–3 ; Col., iii. 11–15.

lowest margin of the subject. It may not be easy to discover, that those who shall be saved, yet so as by fire, are nevertheless upon the only foundation that is laid, which is Jesus Christ ;[1] nor to discern Satan when he is transformed into an angel of light, and his ministers when they are transformed into ministers of righteousness.[2] But assuredly there is no mistaking the Bride of Christ—to whom he saith himself, Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, looking forth like the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.[3]

5. It is those religions which are embraced in the third class, those, namely, which are the product, the sum, and the expression of all true external revelation received from God, which are truly divine. That is the religion now professed by the true Church, visible and universal, of the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor has the human race any interest so great, as that this religion, on the one hand, should have free scope upon earth—and that, on the other, it should not be allowed to depart from its own sublime mission, and thereby not only deprive mankind of infinite blessings, but become perverted into an engine of unspeakable misery. No folly of mankind is more fatal, than the successful accommodation of the Gospel Church, to human philosophies, passions, and ends—the subjugation, that is, of God and eternal truth, to man and to all changeful vanities and lies. The constant effort, rather, should be, to reduce the visible Church more and more perfectly to the absolute standard of divine revelation, on which it wholly reposes ; and to make every human interest which comes within its scope, conform itself more and more, to the same perfect and eternal standard. As for the Church, all she has is the gift of God. When this does not suffice, her mission is at an end. For the Spouse of him who was dead, and is alive, and liveth forevermore, may not accept bridal ornaments from any hand but his, any more than she may lay aside those with which he has adorned her, as proofs at once of his infinite triumph, and his unquenchable love ! What has she to do—I will not say with the pollution and guilt, but with the empty and tawdry splendour of this miserable world ! Her faith—her life—her all, are from above—and there is her hope and her rest : and

[1] 1 Cor., iii. 11–15.

[2] 2 Cor., xi. 13–15.

[3] Solomon's Song, vi. 4–10.

her glory and her blessedness can mean nothing, but the presence and approval of her Lord, and her fitness to serve and to enjoy him!

VI.—1. Our recognition of the Kingdom of God, therefore, under the form of the visible Church universal of the Lord Jesus Christ, is more than the personal recognition of individual believers; however impossible it may be to recognize her in their absence, or except through them. On the other hand, it is less than the recognition of the universal body of the elect—the greater part of whom were never in the flesh together; less also than the recognition of such a universal organic unity of all the elect on earth, as we behold in a particular Church. The Gospel Church has no visible head—the Lord Jesus Christ being its only head; the conditions which attach to our present state, and the necessities and obligations which arise from those conditions, are incompatible with the organic union of the universal Church; the whole course of divine providence renders it impossible, under the present dispensation; and the revealed will of God discloses it as appertaining to a more exalted condition of the Church.[1] Schismatical, and even needless divisions of the Church, are sinful. But national, denominational, or other necessary divisions of it, are no more to be condemned than the organization of separate congregations, or particular Churches; but, on the other hand, to a certain extent, and in certain ways, they promote the peace, the efficiency, and even the spirituality and unity of the Church. The Church visible universal, therefore, which we are to recognize, and which, as I have shown, it is not conceivable that a child of God should mistake, is the Kingdom of God manifested in this world, and struggling to subdue it unto him: God's people indeed—but God's people divinely organized under the banner of the Lord Jesus Christ.[2]

2. Descending from this wide and manifest ground of recognition, whatever particular marks of the true Church may be demanded, must be such as the children of God, with his love in their hearts, and his word in their hands, may clearly and readily distinguish; not such as even the wise and learned might find it difficult to ascertain and determine, though honestly seeking for them, by the light of eternal life. For the Kingdom of God

[1] John, x. 14–16; Rev., xx. 4; Rom., viii. 17–25; Rev., v. 10; 2 Tim., ii. 11–13.

[2] Rev., xix. 13, 14.

must be entered in the spirit of a little child ; it is to the humble and the poor, pre-eminently, that the Gospel is sent ; and the common people are they who have always heard Christ gladly. They are marks, moreover, not determinable by the Church, but by God. Nor are they exclusively for any Church to judge herself by, but for all men, and especially for believers, to judge every Church by. The testimony of any Church, that she possesses them may, or may not, be true ; and must be received or rejected, according as it may be found to be. In their very nature, the marks of the true Church are anterior to the claim of any particular Church—they are logically independent of the Church, and completely and divinely decisive concerning the Church. It is, therefore, wholly absurd to speak of our ascertaining the Church first, and afterwards ascertaining through her, what her true marks are ; which is the method of the Papacy, and a specimen of the methods of all in all ages, who exalt the historical element of the Church to supremacy over its logical and supernatural elements. It is a method by which it is impossible to arrive at truth ; a device whereby the word of God, and the reason and conscience of man, are sought to be controlled, by whatever body of persons, that can obtain, by whatever means, dominion over whatever they see fit to call the Church of God. Its use has been to cast the responsibility of the most atrocious wickedness, and the most abominable perfidy—upon the Church of the living God. Whatever may be the risk of error in determining for ourselves, what these marks are, and where they exist, and by consequence, which is the Church ; it is less by far—and there is no possibility of escaping it—than necessarily falls upon every human soul, in deciding the previous, and still more important questions, which relate to Christ, and to our own souls. Moreover, in both cases, the risk is not diminished—but is immeasurably increased—by trusting to human instead of divine guidance—by following the commandments of a worm like ourselves rather than the doctrine of the living God.[1]

3. There are but two ultimate foundations, upon one or the other of which everything must rest, and all human conduct proceed. One of these is authority, the other is reason : reason, pure and simple, in all natural things—reason, enlightened by divine grace, in all supernatural things. Either of these may be

[1] Matt., xv. 9 ; Isaiah, xxix. 13, 14 ; Col., ii. 18–22.

adopted, and will conduct us completely; but nothing, except one of these, will do so. We may commit our souls to the authority of the priest, to the authority of antiquity, to the authority of the Church—to any authority, lower than that of God—and blindly follow it; and such are the peculiarities of the fallen human soul, that it may be degraded into an unquestioning obedience to its idol—even to its own perdition.[1] Or we may commit ourselves to the guidance of that reason, by which God has distinguished us above the beasts that perish; and addressing it to the great realities which environ us, follow the truth made known supernaturally by divine revelation, and effectually applied to our souls by the Holy Ghost. This is the method ordained of God, commanded in his word, and appropriate to our nature, both as created and regenerated by him. The true and the good become clearer to the soul, and are more precious, as its devotion to them is more constant. The power and the proportion of that divine faith by which we walk, open before our steadfast gaze. And as with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are all changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.[2]

[1] 2 Cor., iv. 4; John, xii. 37–41; 1 Tim., iv. 1–3.
[2] 2 Cor., iii. 18; iv. 6; Col., iii. 10.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PURITY OF FAITH: THE FIRST INFALLIBLE MARK OF THE TRUE CHURCH.

I. 1. Alleged Difficulty of Knowing the True Church of Christ: Cause of whatever may exist: Impostures.—2. Nature of her Infallible Marks.—3. The State of the renewed Soul, responsive to the Revealed Salvation.—4. Purity of Faith, the First Infallible Mark of the True Church.—II. 1. Divine Revelation the Infallible Arbiter of the Purity of Faith—and the Infallible Rule by which to Judge the Church. —2. The Questions of Salvation—Church—Rule of Faith—and Judge of Controversions: Their indissoluble Connection.—3. The exact Relation of the True Church to the Question of the Purity of Faith.—4. God himself the Infallible Judge: In this World by his Word and Spirit: At the Last Day, by Jesus Christ.—5. The Imposture of an Earthly, Infallible, Judge of Faith, and of Controversies.—6. The Relation of all Christian Graces to Purity of Faith.—7. The Saving Work of the Holy Ghost—the Vital Test of the Purity of Faith, and of the Church itself.—8. The Regulative Power of Faith.—III. 1. Nature and ground of our Judgments concerning true Faith, and the true Church.—2. Symbolical Statements of the Christian Church.—3. Hatred and Vengeance of God against Corrupt and Apostate Churches.

I.—1. As soon as God's people on earth assume, by his direction and under his guidance, an organized, separate, visible, common existence; new obligations to each other, and to all mankind, as well as new obligations of individual men and of civil communities towards this divine society, arise out of its creation and action. One alleged difficulty in the performance of these duties, is the pretence of great uncertainty in ascertaining, amidst an immense variety of religions, which is that true Church of God whose existence amongst men gives rise to the duties themselves. Under this pretext, the wicked evade the obligation to follow Christ at all, and willingly confound his Church with every synagogue of Satan; while every anti-christ seeks, through it, to promote his own wicked ends, and to defeat the grace of God, which bringeth salvation. If the world, and more especially the children of Christ, would follow simply and earnestly the light of that reason, with which God has endowed us, and the teachings of that divine word, which he has given to be a lamp unto our feet and a light unto

our path, it is not easy to imagine how the least obscurity could hang over such a question. If the Church were, what she should be—even then the wicked might hate and shun her; but it would be for her glory and beauty—and not upon the shameful pretext that the house of Judah is like all the heathen. As long as the people of God manifest clearly, the new life which animates them, men cannot well avoid taking knowledge of them, that they have been with Jesus; nor can joint inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven fail to recognize each other, and so recognize the body, which they unitedly compose. A city cannot be hid, if it be set on a hill; and salt is cast upon the dunghill, only when it has lost its savour. And it has happened during the most deplorable corruptions of the Church in the high places of the earth, that the obscure and despised but faithful disciples of the Lord, have found refuge, though it were in dens and caves of the earth; and when prevented by persecution from publicly manifesting God's Kingdom, or when unable amidst surrounding darkness and corruption to discern that it existed, they saw plainly that those who claimed to be the Church of Christ, were indeed the Synagogue of Satan. It is in order to favour the pretensions of corrupt, persecuting, and apostate Churches, that all those false and delusive means of distinguishing the true Church, which occupy so large a space in controversies, and which are discussed in systems of theology—were at first invented, and have been so vehemently defended. I leave to those controversies and those systems, the settlement of the true value of such impostures. The whole subject, which to the true Christian is practically extremely simple, has its chief importance in the clear statement of that, which if it had never been intentionally corrupted and obscured, could never have come to be doubted. To that statement, therefore, I will address myself.

2. The Kingdom of God on earth, as I have sufficiently proved, is constituted out of his elect, redeemed, and regenerated people. The nature and end of that Kingdom, have a precise relation to that definite principle and method of its composition. It is, as so composed, of such a nature and for such an end, that it becomes visible more and more, by becoming more and more perfectly organized. Its absolute freedom, thus organized and visible, is complete in its perfect separation from the world, and its perfect consecration to Christ, its only Head. Its supernatural

element is, therefore, its distinguishing element—as exponents of which its logical and historical elements find their chief value. Inevitably, therefore, whatever mark infallibly distinguishes this divine Kingdom, must be in complete accordance with these elemental truths, and must make full account of them all. Whatever pretended mark does not obviously meet this necessity, must obviously be a fallacy and an imposture. Whatsoever mark does obviously meet it, is beyond all peradventure, a permanent and infallible mark of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Where any such mark is found, there is found a portion of that Church —it may be an imperfect one—but still a true portion, of that Church : just as there are real but feeble Christians. Where the whole of these marks are found—and they are both few and simple—there beyond all doubt, that Church is found in her beauty, her strength, and her completeness.

3. Now the fundamental characteristic of every elect, redeemed, and regenerated person—that is of every member of the Church we seek—is, that he is a true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only and all-sufficient Saviour of sinners. To perpetuate and to propagate this belief on earth, for the glory of God and the salvation of men, is the fundamental object of the existence of the Church, and of all its efforts to perfect and extend itself. Every step by which the Church has become organized, visible, and complete, has been a step perfecting, enlarging, and confirming this belief, and making every method of perpetuating and extending it, more and more complete and efficacious. The subject matter of the belief itself, the mode of its communication to men ; the power by which it is made effectual unto salvation ; all the steps by which those who cherish it, are united, organized, and separated from the world into one body unto Christ ; and the total action of that one body, unto the great ends of its own existence : all are supernatural—all are by divine revelation. It is a revealed Saviour, revealed truth, revealed holiness, a revealed Church, a revealed immortality. All are brought nigh to us, and manifested in the union of all who are united to Christ—in the organized communion of all who have communion with Christ. This is that which we profess to seek. That in man which is responsive to all this, God and all God's people in all ages express by a single word—*Faith :* faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ.[1]

[1] Rom., i. 16, 17 ; 1 John, v. 10 ; Eph., i. 13–23 ; ii. 3–21.

4. The first infallible mark of the true Church is, therefore, the *Purity of her Faith.* That faith, of which Christ crucified is the specific object ;[1] of which the word of God revealed to us in the sacred Scriptures, is the only infallible rule :[2] of the production of which, as existing in us, the Holy Ghost is the divine agent :[3] which is unto us the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen :[4] which is in us a divine power, working by love, and purifying the heart, so that in every one that is born of God faith is the victory that overcometh the world.[5] This is so great a reality, and is so directly related to Jesus Christ, that he is himself both the author and the finisher of it ;[6] and without it, it is impossible to please God.[7] In this wide and yet most specific sense, purity of Faith is the simplest, most obvious, most universal, and most comprehensive mark, by which to ascertain and determine the union and communion of any soul with Christ—and by which to judge and settle the claim of every Church to be considered a part of his visible Church. What can be more certain than that a Church thus spiritually and completely united to the Lord Jesus Christ—is his Church ? What can be more monstrous than for a Church, defiled and drunken with the blood of saints and martyrs, shed for their maintenance of the truth as it is in Jesus—to call herself *his* Body, *his* Bride ?[8] The Church with respect to Christ, is his Body ; with respect to the human race, it is the company of God's elect saved by grace. Omitting either of these ideas—much more omitting both—the conception of the Church vanishes : and every society that propounds ideas of the Church opposite to these, or fails to propound these, as its foundation—is by force of its own statement, no Church of Christ. For the elemental idea of that *purity* of Faith, which is itself the elemental mark of the true Church is, that it has for its object the divine Redeemer, crucified for us, who is unto us the wisdom of God, and the power of God.[9]

II.—1. I have devoted a previous chapter to the establishment and illustration of the great truth, that the sacred Scriptures are the only infallible rule of faith and practice. Little need be added now to show, that being the only rule whereby we can infallibly know what we ought to believe concerning God ;

[1] 1 Cor., i. 23, 24. [2] Isaiah, viii. 20. [3] Eph., ii. 8–10.
[4] Heb., xi. 1. [5] 1 John, v. 4, 5. [6] Heb., xii. 2.
[7] Heb., x. 6. [8] Rev., xvii. 6. [9] 1 Cor., i. 21–31.

they are necessarily the only rule whereby we can determine whether any particular belief concerning God, is right or wrong —any particular thing believed true or false. It is one of the ultimate laws of our being—without which indeed, our nature could not be called rational—that we must believe whatever appears to us to be established on sufficient evidence. Our belief cannot, indeed, change the nature of things ; but it is itself regulated by constant laws, one of which I have just stated. It is of the essence of that law, and of our nature, that we must judge for ourself, of the sufficiency of that evidence ; and this judgment, also, is regulated by constant laws. Truth is, in all things, that which we ought to believe—that which was natural to the soul in its original purity—which it still desires and seeks in proportion as it is pure—and whose existence, as a divine reality, we cannot deny without denying our rational and moral nature, and involving ourselves in endless contradictions. But as truth presents itself to us in connection with all things, and therefore in a boundless variety of aspects ; evidence of its existence, its presence, and its particular form, must also be various in its kind, so as to be pertinent and responsive to the various aspects in which truth appears. Thus, facts cannot be established, except by proof : a logical conclusion cannot be reached except by a process of reasoning : the external world cannot be known to us except through our senses : nor the internal except through our consciousness. Now truth that can be known to us only from God, must depend on the testimony of God. And this is precisely the case with everything that is the object of saving faith. There can be no adequate evidence of such things, independently of that given by God himself : for if there could be, both the nature of saving faith, and the nature of that truth, which is the rule of it, would be wholly changed. For us, his revealed word, and his divine Spirit, and faith itself created by the Spirit and regulated by the word, are witnesses of the infinite truth he teaches us—witnesses of the infinite veracity of God. The word of God, therefore, made plain to the soul, in its own divine light, and divine power, by the Holy Ghost, is not only the appropriate, but is the only existing manifestation to us, in a way of infallible guidance, of the will of God concerning our salvation. To deny this is to render salvation by means of a divine Revelation, impossible : for it is to deny the competency of God to reveal saving truth to man—

and to deny also his competency to make that truth effectual in man, even if it were revealed. Moreover, if we are not competent to determine the Church of God, by the revealed truth of God ; much less are we competent to determine our own relation to that Church, by means of that truth. For the second question requires us to determine three things, instead of the single one involved in the first question : and one of these three is that insoluble first question : for we never can determine our relation to the Church, until we know both our relation to God, and the relation of the Church to God. The end of which is, to make the soul, the Church, and the truth, mutually incompetent and irrelevant, each to both the others : as before to make God incompetent alike to reveal truth, or make it, if revealed, effectual in man.

2. The question of the judge of controversies, is a corollary of the question of the rule of faith ; and its decision must follow the decision of the main question ; just as the question of the rule of faith, is itself a corollary of the question of the Church, and must be decided according to the idea we have of the Church itself ; and just as the question of the Church, is a corollary of the question concerning the nature of personal salvation. They are indissolubly united in the word of God ; and at the bar of reason the decision of one necessarily controls the decision of the rest, through the series in its order. If the personal salvation of man is secured sacramentally, *ex opere operato*, then the Church may be the visible society of all those, who by such a baptism, are bound to the adoption of a particular external creed, to the use of those sacraments so operating by their own force, and to obedience to a common visible head : and their faith is according to that creed—as interpreted by that Church, or its head ; which latter is the judge of controversies. This is a State—not a Church : salvation is impossible this way : in short this is Popery. On the other hand if, by personal salvation, we mean union and communion with the Lord Jesus Christ, by means of the renewal of the soul through the work of the divine Spirit ; then the Church is the congregation of the saints, the gathered body of all believers in Christ ; and the rule of its faith is the word of God ; and the question of the judge of controversies —as I will immediately show—receives a corresponding solution. This is in reality a Church : salvation in this way, is

revealed from Heaven, and is certain: this, in short, is Christianity.

3. It is, no doubt, true that the Church, being the pillar and ground of the truth, and being charged with the work of evangelizing all nations by means of that truth, must receive that truth in the love of it—must proclaim it to all men—must earnestly contend for it, and must faithfully apply it both in the way of doctrine, and in the way of discipline. And, doubtless, decrees and decisions concerning the truth, and concerning controversies, are proper to all councils, assemblies, synods, and other lawful authorities in the Church; composed of the overseers and other rulers of particular Churches, met by virtue of their office in the name, and by the authority of the Lord Jesus.[1] And these decrees and decisions, if consonant to the word of God, are to be received with reverence and submission, not only for their agreement with the word of God, but also for the power whereby they are made, as being an ordinance of God appointed thereunto in his word.[2] And in general, the presumption—before any particular enquiry—is that all such decrees and decisions of the true Church, are consonant to the truth of God: but since the visible Church is not infallible—that presumption may be false: nor is it possible for any decrees or decisions of a fallible Church, to bind the conscience, by their own power. In this way, and to this extent only, the Church visible is the judge of controversies concerning that pure faith which is her own fundamental mark. She must keep the unity of the Spirit—she must keep herself pure—and in the love of God.[3]

4. Beyond this, every man must judge for himself, and on the peril of his soul, what true Faith is, and where it is to be found, and what is the value, and what the result of such controversies about it, as it may be his duty to meddle with.[4] Every company of believers must act in like manner—for themselves, and for the furtherance of truth, peace, charity and holiness.[5] The universal Church visible, must in its life, its testimony, its worship, and its efforts, show itself alive to the discharge of those great functions, which I have shown appertain to it, with reference to the maintenance of truth and peace, and the suppression

[1] Acts, xv. *passim.*
[2] Acts, xv. 27–31; xvi. 4; Matt., xviii. 17.
[3] Eph., iv. 3; 1 Tim., v. 22; Jude, 21.
[4] Rom.. xiv. 5.
[5] Rev., ii. 2, 6, 14, 20; iii. 20.

of error and disorder. But God himself, the fountain of all truth, is also the true judge of all controversies concerning it. The author and finisher of our faith, and the giver of the only infallible rule alike of that true faith and of all duty connected with it; is alone able to destroy every refuge of lies, and to cast the father of them all into the lake of fire.[1] For this present life, the divine and infallible word, given by inspiration of God, profitable for all things, and able to furnish the man of God for every good work, and make him wise unto salvation—is the great arbiter. It is God, who speaks to us through it. And his divine Spirit, working in us, and also applying it with divine power and wisdom to our soul, mind, and heart—leads us into all truth: and by the manifold testimony of our own renewed conscience, heart, and soul—of the infallible word of God—and of the witnessing Spirit—God begets in us an infallible assurance of faith.[2] And finally, in the great day of Jesus Christ, he the eternal judge of the secrets of all hearts—will judge and settle for all eternity—every question which enters into the endless fate of every soul. To that bar, at last, all questions of good and evil must go: this with all the rest.

5. The whole doctrine of an infallible living judge of controversies, competent and divinely authorized to bind the conscience by his decisions, and to put an end to controversies concerning faith, not only by ecclesiastical censures but by direct temporal punishments of every sort; is one of those impostures, whose terrible influence upon mankind has been great in proportion to its utter want of any foundation in reason, in the word of God, or in necessity whether temporal or spiritual. I have shown that its logical foundation lies in a definition of the Church, itself so utterly false, that what results from the definition is a State—and not a Church—and that under it the possibility of salvation disappears. If it could be supposed, that such a doctrine could have any plea of necessity, it must be, that controversies about faith are intolerable, and can, and should be put an end to, by punishment. But every part of this plea is a fallacy, of which it is not easy to say, whether the folly or the wickedness exceeds. Heresy and schism can no more be put an end to, than any other

[1] Rev., xx. 10–14.

[2] Heb., vi. 11–19; Eph., i. 13, 14; 1 John, v. 13; Rom., viii. 15, 16; 2 Cor., i. 21, 22.

form of sin or folly. Neither of them is an offence which ought to subject men to temporal punishment. Nor if they could be suppressed, and if they ought to be suppressed by punishment, when considered of themselves; is the peril arising from their free toleration, worthy to be thought of, when compared with the evils resulting from every attempt to enforce such doctrines. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that they who usurped the prerogatives both of God and of the State—should have been given over to commit offences both against God and the State, a thousand times more heinous than those they caused to be visited with fire and sword. The Church of God can survive all heresies and schisms which God will endure. But she cannot exist, without proclaiming her abhorrence of the combined ferocity and ignorance, which under the pretext of an infallible decision of controversies, would exterminate the last believer in Christ.

6. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.[1] Gold, silver, and precious stones may be builded thereon, and they shall abide forever; or wood, hay, and stubble may be builded thereon, and they shall be destroyed in the day when every man's work shall be revealed by fire. That house which is founded upon a rock, falls not; but sure and great is the fall of that house, which is built upon the sand; and this is the difference, pointed out by Christ, between those—whether they be men or Churches—who hear his sayings and do them, and those who hear, and do them not.[2] It is they who are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone—who are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.[3] Nor does it change the nature of the case, that men and churches err concerning the truth, and overthrow the faith of some; for the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal—the Lord knoweth them that are his.[4] But having found the true foundation—it is the duty of all—whether men or Churches, to build upon it—to leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and go on unto perfection.[5] Every Christian grace is the product of the revealed word and the divine Spirit, as really as faith is; every one, as truly as it depends upon the

[1] 1 Cor., iii. 11. [2] Matt., vii. 24–29. [3] Eph., ii. 19, 20.
[4] 2 Tim., ii. 18, 19. [5] Heb., vi. 1–6.

union and communion of the renewed soul with the glorified Redeemer, and like it is a manifestation of the new life of that soul. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance and such like, are declared to be the fruit of the Spirit in them that are led by the Spirit. Whereas adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like, are the works of the flesh: concerning which these two things are plainly declared, namely, that they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God—and that they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.[1]

7. To be born of the Spirit, is at once the condition and the method of our entrance into the Kingdom of God.[2] The rejection of the doctrine of the Holy Ghost and of his saving work in the human soul, therefore, renders it impossible for any sinner to be saved; how much more for a company of such impenitent and unbelieving sinners, to constitute that very Kingdom, which neither of them—Christ himself being judge—can either see, or enter? The Church of Christ is by Christ, and our entrance into it is through him. But if the direct opposite—as Rome asserts—were true, and our connection with Christ were produced by our connection with the Church; even then, when we reject the doctrine of the saving work of the divine Spirit—what results is, that the Church is composed exclusively of such as have by that rejection, rendered salvation impossible. That is, the visible portion of the saved—consists of those whose salvation is, upon the data, impossible. It is precisely, upon the doctrine of the saving work of the divine Spirit, that all corrupt and apostate Churches are prone to make shipwreck. Christ himself has said, that much sin against him may be forgiven, and that great blindness and perversity can be overlooked, in those who really love him. But it is otherwise with regard to the Holy Ghost, whose office it is, not only to teach us truth, and make us holy, but also to give us life. In rejecting, resisting, and denying him, we sin not only against truth and holiness, but against life itself; and blaspheming him—which we do when we disallow his work, or when we ascribe his work to Satan, to the incantations of priests, to the inherent force of sacraments, or to anything else—

[1] Gal., v. 16–26. [2] John, iii. 1–21.

is, in its very nature, a sealing over to perdition.[1] It is here that the humble follower of Christ is least likely to err, in finding the true heirs of salvation—the true Bride of the Lamb. For it is in the unity of the Spirit that the bond of peace is kept—it is the witness of the Spirit that is the crowning proof to the children of God, of their one ingrafting into Christ—and error concerning the doctrine of the divine Spirit, enters into every form of fatal heresy.

8. The power of faith itself as a force regulating the life of man, by means of its transforming power in his soul; would be a proper topic of enquiry in determining that purity of faith, by which the Church itself is to be judged. That faith only can be pure, which makes us pure; and it is the constraining love of Christ, by which it works;—and this inward purifying and this powerful working by love, are of the essence of that victory over the world, which faith itself is declared to be.[2] I have, however, in former chapters, very fully and variously discussed the general subject; and it will be necessary, in a succeeding chapter, to examine this special aspect of it, in considering that infallible mark of the true Church which is exhibited in a holy life. A Church which inculcates sin, can be considered nothing else than a Synagogue of Satan—and its unhappy members heirs of perdition.

III.—1. It is the duty of every one to strive after perfection in truth and holiness—the duty of the Church of the living God to strive, above all, after exact conformity to his will in all things. Whether in Churches or in individuals, voluntary ignorance of divine things, is declared to be the peculiar sin of scoffers, walking after their own lusts; who are the peculiar pest of the last days, and whose contented ignorance envelops nothing more deeply, than the swift destruction which awaits them against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.[3] But in forming those judgments which we are obliged to form, both of individuals and Churches, there is a wide difference to be made, according to the opportunities they have enjoyed, and the light they have; a wide difference also between the position they occupy, as teachers and leaders of God's people, or as humble disciples—much more as lambs of Christ's flock. Nevertheless, there are attainments in the divine life, which are absolutely distinctive

[1] Matt., xii. 31, 32; Acts, vii. 51–53. [2] 1 John, v. 4.
[3] 2 Peter, iii. 1–7.

of Christianity; for the impenitent and unbelieving cannot be Christians. And there are revealed truths so absolutely fundamental, that their removal from the plan of salvation completely destroys it as the way of life eternal. I have stated, in every variety of form, what I suppose to be the immediate and universal foundations of that Gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;[1] and God himself has declared, that if an Apostle, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel than that of Christ, he is accursed.[2] It is absolutely impossible, therefore, to esteem any faith pure, or any Church true, unless the Lord Jesus Christ is accepted in sincerity as the divine Saviour crucified for lost sinners—unless the word of God is accepted purely as the infallible rule of faith and duty—unless the Holy Ghost is accepted as divinely and effectually working in the soul—and unless the new life, imparted to us by these means, with its perpetual fruits, is accepted as the result of all. With less than this, neither truth nor charity can admit, that the revealed remedy for sin has been received by man; or that men know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent—which is eternal life.[3] In effect, therefore, the true and satisfactory judgment which every child of God forms concerning purity of faith, and concerning the true Church; is the necessary result of his own inward experience of divine things, grounded upon his own saving knowledge of Christ. Nor is any truth more clear in itself, or more clearly revealed, than that if any man will do the will of God, he shall know the doctrine whether it be of God.[4]

2. The lawfulness and the value of the symbolical books of the Christian Churches—those creeds and confessions against which all heretics have protested—seem to be beyond reasonable doubt. Indeed, it is not possible in the nature of the case to avoid the formation and use of systematic statements, which are essentially creeds. Every one who accepts the Gospel as the ground of his hope, the rule of his faith, or the standard of his life; necessarily accepts it according to some sense of its various parts—and of the whole composed of those parts; and necessarily utters this accepted sense of the parts, and of the whole, as often as he has occasion to explain his religious life. But this

[1] Rom., i. 16.
[2] Gal., i. 8.
[3] 1 John, v. *passim*
[4] John, vii. 17.

is simply the formation and utterance of his creed. If the Gospel of God is so intractable, that its various parts cannot be put together in some systematic order, then it is simply incapable of being known by man, otherwise than as a series of incoherent statements: if it is capable of being systematically stated—then the primitive laws of our being unavoidably oblige us to state it so, as soon as we take interest enough in it to desire to understand it. And every organized Church must necessarily do something tantamount to this, every time it acts organically; and it is its indispensable duty to do so, both in order to preserve its own purity and peace, and to bear its testimony for the truth of God. Nor is it without great value to the Church herself, that the most distinct expressions of her faith should be as permanent as they are articulate. For by them the highest and surest proof is created and preserved, through all ages, not only of her existence but of her condition, age after age, beside the mighty stream of time, as it rolls across all the centuries. It is thus she erects, from generation to generation, great landmarks, by which posterity may know assuredly, how far the inundation of error had spread, and how deeply the waters of eternal life had fertilized the earth. Of course, human creeds can possess no more than human authority; and it is the highest profanation to put them on a level with the word of God. But they may justly claim great authority; chiefly because they may—and so far as they do—accord with the divine word. In addition, they are covenants, mutually binding, as such, upon the conscience of all who voluntarily enter into them. And the clearness, fulness, rational power, and spiritual unction, with which the great truths of salvation and the great duties of men, may be systematically stated by such as God raises up, from time to time, for this very end; become means of great comfort to his poople, and of great confusion to his enemies. The Spirit, which has always been the life of the Church, sometimes more powerfully, sometimes less so, produces by his powerful presence, nothing more certainly, than a renewed hatred of error, and a fervent love of truth, leading to those great conflicts, out of which all the great testimonies of the Church have been accustomed to spring; testimonies which there is reason to accept, as in a peculiar manner expressive of the life of God's Church, in its most powerful manifestations.

3. It is impossible for the heart of man to conceive too deeply,

of the sin of corrupt Churches, and of God's hatred of them. Throughout the Scriptures, the image of the true Church is a chaste, loving, and faithful wife; and besides innumerable separate passages, the entire Book of the Song of Solomon—and that not one of the shortest—is devoted to the complete illustration of this similitude. On the other hand, a faithless, corrupt, and shameless wife, is everywhere the image of an apostate Church; and besides multitudes of separate passages, a large part of the last Book of the inspired oracles, is employed in exposing and denouncing the greatest, bloodiest, and most polluted of all apostacies, under the frightful appellation of a harlot. Nor is there any command delivered to such of God's children, as may chance to be found in such Synagogues of Satan, more distinct than that they should come out of them; nor any threat more precise, than that they will, otherwise, be partakers of their sins, and receive of their plagues.[1] It is not, therefore, only against error, delusion, and sin, abstractly considered, that God calls his children to testify; but, also, against the corruptors and oppressors of the earth —and that all the more earnestly when their sins are perpetrated in his holy name. Heaven itself is called on to rejoice, with holy apostles and prophets, when God avenges his slaughtered saints upon great Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth: and the voice of much people in heaven is heard glorifying the Lord God, and saying, Alleluia—when the smoke of her torment rises up, forever and ever![2]

[1] Rev., xviii. 4; Isaiah, xlviii. 20; lii. 11; 2 Cor., vi. 17, 18.

[2] Rev., xviii. 5, 20; xix. 1–3.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE WORSHIP OF GOD IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH: THE SECOND INFALLIBLE MARK OF THE TRUE CHURCH.

I. 1. Divine Statement of the Three Infallible Marks of the True Christian, and the True Church; The Second One now to be explained.—2. The Unity and Spirituality of God the sole Object of all Religious Worship: The Truth and Spirituality of all Worship, acceptable to Him.—3. True Conception of this Worship—and of its Nature and Grounds.—4. Relation of the Word of God, and of the Life of God in our Souls, to each other, and to God's Worship.—5. God—Religion—Worship—Salvation—Human Nature.—II. 1. The Kingdom of Royal Priests: Their Life, a Life of Worship.—2. The Obligation, the Rule, the Blessedness, and the Perpetuity of this Ordination.—3. The Plan of Salvation—the Work of Christ—the Divine Idea and Organism of the Church, relative to Worship.—4. That Organism in its Fundamental Nature as hitherto disclosed—and as yet to be traced in Connection with the Gifts of God to his Church.—5. Relation of the Sacrifice and Priesthood of Christ, and of his Ascension Gifts, to the Idea of True Spiritual Worship by the Church.—6. The Relation of Worship to Religion, and to God—through every conception thereof—from the widest to the narrowest.—7. Worship, as divinely disclosed in each Christian Congregation.—8. Abstract Demonstration, of the unavoidable Conclusion.

I.—1. We are the circumcision, says the Apostle Paul, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.[1] These are the marks in the elect individually, of reigning grace; the marks also, in their collective body when organized into Christ's visible Church, by which that body is to be infallibly distinguished as his body. According to the point of view from which the subject is contemplated, the particulars of this divine and all pervading definition, fall into one or another order; but in whatever order of these particulars, unitedly they absolutely distinguish the child of God—and the Church of God. In the order of absolute reality, they stand as the Apostle has placed them; for all is from God, all is through Christ, and all is unto our complete deliverance from all subjection to the flesh, and from all trust in it. In the order of actual

[1] Phil., iii. 3.

development to our weak understandings, and to a certain extent, also, in the mode of their inworking with our souls; their manifestation to us is, perhaps, more clear from the lowest to the highest, to wit, man, Christ, God. And considered as accomplished in us, and viewed as marks of our estate before God, the first thing is our relation to Christ, and then our relation to God through him, and then our real condition produced in that manner. I have, therefore, treated first and with reference to Christ and our glorying in him, purity of Faith as the first infallible mark of the true Church. And I am now to treat of the true spiritual worship of God, which is indissolubly connected with our union and communion with Christ, as the second mark. And in the next chapter I will endeavour to disclose, as the third mark, that holiness of life—that total abnegation of the flesh—which is the product, through Christ, of all divine operation in the human soul.

2. There can be but one God. I have proved that with any true notion of the living God, we are incapable of conceiving of a second God: and the Scriptures, as we might expect, assert continually, and imply throughout, that God is one.[1] The reality and the unity of his existence—are the primitive truths upon which the possibility of all spiritual religion rests. Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one God: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might:[2] this is the revealed foundation of whatever acceptable worship—in whatever sense of that term—man has ever rendered to God.[3] He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him: for without faith it is impossible to please him.[4] Ye worship ye know not what; said Jesus to the woman of Samaria—we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. For God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and in truth. And then he told her plainly, that he was Messias—the Christ:—I that speak unto thee am he.[5] In like manner, the other part of true religion—all duty as well as

[1] Gal., iii. 20; Rom., iii. 30; 1 Tim., ii. 5; 1 Cor., viii. 4.
[2] Deut., vi. 4, 5.
[3] Deut., vi. 13; x. 20; 1 Cor., viii. 6.
[4] Heb. x. 6.
[5] John, iv. 21–26.

all faith, is involved directly in these immense truths; and all morality—all holiness—that is acceptable to God, as a part of true and spiritual worship—depends upon the recognition of them. Thou shalt have no other gods before me; is the foundation of the moral law written with the finger of God in the nature of man—revealed anew at Sinai—and wrought by the Holy Ghost in the inward parts of every saved sinner.[1] And the true and spiritual worship of God, responsive to the whole duty required of man towards God—is declared by Christ himself; Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.[2] But the Triune God—the God revealed to us in the sacred Scriptures—is the only, the living, and the true God; God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—is the sole object of all true and spiritual worship: and what is to be illustrated now is, that the worship of this glorious God, in spirit and in truth, is the second infallible mark, of the true Church, visible, universal, of the Lord Jesus Christ.[3]

3. I have proved, abundantly, that as the creatures of God, we are obliged to make his will the rule of our conduct, in all things; and that as his sinful creatures, we are obliged to make the will of the divine Saviour whom he has provided for us, the rule of our conduct in all things. But God our Creator, and God our Saviour—is the same, and the only God; so that both as creatures merely, and as sinful creatures also, we are bound to him in our souls, and in our bodies, in all that we have and are. To render back to him, in the way pointed out by himself, the love, the service, the praise, and the adoration which are due to him; to do this truly, out of penitent and believing hearts—to do it spiritually, as unto the infinite Spirit who fills immensity and eternity—to do it, in all things: this is the posture of God's children towards him, revealed in the Scriptures as their glory and blessedness. In this posture, taught by the word of God, and led by the Spirit of God—their lives are, in the widest and truest sense, a true, spiritual, and perpetual recognition—service—worship of God. What God is, of himself, entitles him to all this, on our part: and what he has done for us, entitles him to it all, in a manner still more precise. The heartfelt recognition

[1] Exod., xx. 3; Jer., xxxi. 33. [2] Matt., xxii. 37, 38; Luke, x. 27, 28.
[3] Phil., iii. 3; 1 John, ii. 22, 23; Matt., iv. 10.

of this—the willing and joyful endeavour to manifest that we do thus recognize it—and, by consequence, the habitual surrender of our will to his will: this is true and spiritual worship of God, and he who strives to render it, is the child of God—and the Church that inculcates and practices it, is the true Church of the Lord Jesus. The ordinary and restricted sense of the worship of God is true, and is a part of this wide and comprehensive sense of it; but to make that the whole, is to come far short of what God requires—nay even of what his feeble but loving children habitually render to him.

4. The revelation which God has given to us of his will concerning our salvation, makes known to us the only way in which we can accomplish the chief end of our existence, in glorifying him and enjoying him forever; and it does this by teaching us infallibly, what we ought to believe concerning God, and what duty he requires of us. It follows, that the infallible rule of our faith and obedience, is, of necessity, the infallible rule of our worship of him in whom we believe, and whom we serve—no matter in what sense we use the term. And the sacred Scriptures disclose to us, in the clearest manner, the nature of that true and spiritual worship, in its widest sense, as well as the method of that which is more special, in its narrowest sense. The habitual state of heart which they everywhere inculcate, is one which finds its truest manifestation in a life of habitual recognition—service—worship of God, our Creator and Redeemer: and all mercy, through endless generations, is covenanted to them, who, in such a spirit, love God and keep his commandments.[1] Moreover, Jesus Christ, who is the specific object of our faith, and both its author and its finisher; is, also, the head and means of all acceptable worship of God. Through him alone, is there any mercy from God to sinners; by him alone, is there any access for sinners to God. It is unto him, that the elect of God are predestinated to be conformed; and the Church composed of them is his Body.[2] The revelation of him, is that which gives unity to the sacred Scriptures; and to justify him, is the peculiar work and office of the Holy Spirit. And that heartfelt worship of God, manifest in all things, is the fruit in us, of the word and Spirit of God, through the merits of the Lord Christ; and they who

[1] Deut., vi. *passim;* Exod., xx. 6.

[2] John, xiv. 6; Rom., viii. 29; Col., i. 24.

render it, can be only such as enabled by a pure faith—and, beyond all doubt, it is at once the means and the expression of a holy life.[1] So that the connection of this mark of the true Church, is indissoluble alike with the one that precedes it, and the one that follows it.

5. The deepest and most enduring element of our nature, is its religious element. Human nature must have a God, a religion, a worship. Each one of us knows that we are finite—each one feels that there is an infinite, from which that finite comes, and to which it returns. In its presence, our sense of dependence, of accountability, and of blameworthiness, is explicable alike to our reason and our conscience ; and our susceptibility of restoration, a sense of which was never utterly lost, is no sooner demonstrated by the very fact of being restored—than the infinite object of so many convictions, is demonstrated too. Our utter helplessness, in our natural estate, to all that is spiritually good —our unalterable assurance of a life beyond death—our sense of an eternal judgment, of our unfitness to appear in it, and of the fear of God : in what manner is it possible to evolve such convictions as these common convictions of our race—without disclosing a God—a religion—a worship ? But, if the God of the Bible is not God—if the religion of Jesus is not true and divine —if the worship of that God, through that Saviour, in Spirit and in truth, is not an infallible mark of the restoration of the soul : then it is infallibly certain, that all the fundamental convictions of our nature are false, and utterly destitute both of cause and result—and that there is no God—no religion—no worship. So that every way, the same result follows. And from the side of God—of the Saviour—of revelation—of religion in its widest sense—and of human nature in its profoundest convictions ; the result is that true and spiritual worship, as the Lord has taught us, is the only worship acceptable to the infinite Spirit—the only worship taught or tolerated by Messias—the Christ.[2]

II.—1. It is the Church, considered not merely in its individual elements, but chiefly in its social life, that we are at present seeking to distinguish. It is the life, the worship, of a divine Kingdom, which is to be determined. And this of necessity gives the broadest significance to the term, which, for lack of one more

[1] Deut., xii. 3 ; Matt., xv. 9 ; John, xiv. 6 ; 1 Tim., ii. 5 ; Eph., ii. 18.

[2] John, iv. 19–26.

comprehensive, I am forced to use. For the social life of the Church of God, in its whole organism and action, is a life of worship: a life, that is, of religious obedience to the revealed will of God, through the Lord Jesus Christ. It is clean hands and pure hearts, lifted up to God in sincere faith and exact obedience, whether to labour, to suffer, or to testify; by those who once were not a people, but are now the people of God. For though once they had not obtained mercy, now they have obtained mercy. The everlasting doors have been lifted up, and the King of glory, who is the Lord of hosts, has come in, and given the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of our salvation.[1] Organized as the visible Church of him who called them out of darkness into his marvellous light, their very vocation is to show forth his praises. And by whatever acts, through whatever forms, in whatever ways their communion with each other and their organic life are made manifest; it is still through faith in Christ Jesus—still by the guidance of his word and Spirit—still in reverent and joyful obedience to God; it is still the recognition—the service—the true and spiritual worship of the most high God. Is not that a worship—in which none but God's priests take part? Is not that regal worship—where every priest of God is also a king? God promised, from of old, to make that holy nation the most peculiar of all people, even a kingdom of priests;[2] and the crucified and exalted Saviour, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works—makes every one he loves and washes from his sins in his own blood, both a king and a priest unto God and his Father.[3] Yea, and the sacrifices of these priests of the Lord—these ministers of our God—are the very sacrifices of God—a broken spirit. And he that came to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.[4] Yea, verily, remove the idea of true worship from our spiritual

[1] Psalm xxiv. *passim;* 1 Peter, ii. 10.
[2] Exod., xix. 5, 6.
[3] Titus, ii. 14; Rev., i. 5, 6; 1 Peter, ii. 9.
[4] Psalm li. 17; Isaiah. lxi. 1–5; Luke, iv. 16–32.

life, personal and organic—and the Kingdom of Royal Priests is extinct—Christians exist no longer !

2. I have shown that the worship of the true Church of Christ, has such a relation to its faith and its obedience, that it must necessarily have the same infallible rule which they have—that is the word of God contained in the sacred Scriptures.[1] All true and spiritual worship which is acceptable to God, is divine—is revealed by God to man ; it is therefore strictly obligatory upon the creature—while it is, at the same time, a means of blessedness to him, and, through him, of great and endless glory to God. There can be neither any service of God, nor any enjoyment of him, by any creature, which does not assume the nature and form of worship.[2] But the service and enjoyment of God, is our glory and blessedness throughout eternity ; and to increase our fitness and our desire for that service and enjoyment of God in this life, by gathering and perfecting his saints to the end of the world, is the very mission of the Church on earth.[3] It may well be, that the glorified saints and the Church triumphant, will serve and enjoy God in a manner widely different from any, now clearly appreciable by us ; for this has occurred, to a remarkable extent, under the successive dispensations of grace even upon earth. But it has not occurred, nor can it occur, that the idea of the worship of God in Spirit and in truth—and that through Jesus Christ our Lord—has been separated, or is separable from all true service, all conceivable enjoyment of him, by any creature. Everything we know concerning heaven, is mingled with exalted worship ; and the whole life of the Son of God—who is the way, the truth, and the life—was a life in which the idea of worship—in every sense—is perpetually manifest and perpetually designated by himself.[4] Recalling what I have said in a former chapter, touching the great elements of the question of the Church ; the supremacy which I have asserted for its supernatural element, is perfectly palpable in the determination of this second infallible mark of it ; and, at the same time, the utter absurdity and impiety of all human changes in the revealed worship of God—whether in the nature of it, or the form of it. In the lowest possible sense, to act in that manner is to assume

[1] Rom.., i. 3.
[2] Psalm lxv. 2 ; Mal., i. 11.
[3] Isaiah. lix. 21 ; Phil., ii. 10, 11.
[4] John, iv. 3–34 ; Matt., xxvi. 36–46.

divine authority, and exercise it in a way which we cannot know is acceptable to God; and in a broader sense it is the assumption of divine authority over the faith—obedience—and inner life of the Church, the whole of which are involved in the idea of its worship, and find expression in connection with it.[1]

3. The social life of the Church—essentially a life of the worship of God—is commensurate with the divine organization of the Church; for that divine organization, in itself, extends to the entire social life of the Church; and the mode of its production, and everything implied in its existence, and resulting from it, are all related, in the most intimate manner, to the true and spiritual worship of God. The root of our salvation lies in our union with Christ; and our communion with him in grace and glory, is the source of every blessing and every benefit of the Covenant of Redemption received by us, whether in this world, or in the world to come. The communion of his children with each other, is the effect of their common union with him; and his headship over his redeemed—is the effect of his whole work as Mediator between God and man, whether as our Prophet, our Priest, or our King—and is, indeed, the fundamental stipulation of the Covenant of Redemption. But this communion of saints, and this headship of Christ, are the component elements of the Kingdom of God, considered as an organized Church—the Body of Christ. Yet, nothing can be more obvious, than that this Church of the Lord Jesus, whether considered in those elemental principles of it—or in its own nature and end—or in its complete organization and visibility—or in its spiritual freedom and consecration to Christ—through the whole of which I have carefully traced it; totally changes its whole relation to Christ on one side, and to penitent and believing sinners on the other side, the moment she is stripped of the glorious function of vindicating before the universe, God's exclusive right to the adoration of every creature—and of illustrating to all eternity what his true worship is—and what is the blessedness of all who render it.[2]

4. The progress of our enquiry into the Knowledge of God Subjectively Considered, renders it necessary to discuss the question of the infallible marks of the true Church, as soon as a certain point has been reached in tracing the effects divinely pro-

[1] Matt., xv. 9; Matt., iv. 10.

[2] Eph., iii. 7–13; 1 Cor., ii. 7–10.

duced, by the use which God has made of the doctrines of the Headship of Christ, and the communion of saints, in the organization of the Church visible, universal. In the general enquiry, it remains to explain, as fully as my limits permit, the vast subject of the gifts of God to this Church—which I propose in the next Book. Having now illustrated the nature of the true and spiritual worship of God, as the second infallible mark of the true Church, by means of the truths already established, concerning its divine organization ; I will point out, in a more general manner, the bearing, upon the same topic, of those Gifts of God to his Church, hereafter to be carefully considered, which have immediate relation to that organization—and therefore to her visibility, and to her social life.

5. The idea of sacrifice, strictly considered, as a perpetual form of outward worship for the Church of God, was perfectly consummated in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ ; after which there would remain no more offering for sin, since Christ has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and by that one offering hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.[1] The idea of priesthood is indissolubly connected with the idea of sacrifice. I have shown, in another place, how the institution of the Passover was connected with the rise of the priesthood, through the first born of Israel whom the destroying angel spared ; and how both sacrifice and priesthood stood related to Jesus Christ, and through him to the Gospel Church and to its ministry. The priesthood of Christ was after the order of Melchisedeck—and was, like his sacrifice, unchangeable and for eternity ; and this being so, he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.[2] Both sacrifice and priesthood, therefore, occupy a peculiar position in the Gospel Church :—the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the very nature of the peculiar people—children and heirs of God, every one of whom is both a king and a priest—manifesting continually those great ideas, and the relation of both of them to Christ. In the body of this kingdom of royal priests —a ministry is established by Christ—office-bearers are divinely ordained—a government is constituted—tribunals are erected—sacraments are instituted—its special worship is disclosed—the

[1] Heb., ix. 19–28 ; Heb., x. *passim.*

[2] Heb., vi. 20 ; Heb., vii. 24, 25.

relation of the word of God and of all divine ordinances to it is clearly pointed out—and Discipline, both in the wide and in the judicial sense of that term, is appointed of God. For the present enforcement of the truth, that the true and spiritual worship of God is an infallible mark of the true Church; it is not material that the general statement just made of the ordinances and ascension Gifts of Christ, should be exactly true; that it is so, however, will be proved hereafter.[1] Because the adoring recognition—service—worship of God, is already admitted to be an infallible mark of his Church, as soon as we confess that his Church is bound to ascertain from his word, under the guidance of his Spirit—whether these things are so: and thus seeking, is bound not only, but is prompt, to accept with joyful obedience everything which God has ordained, and to reject everything else. And what heart that adores God, can conceive that voluntary ignorance of his will—much less open disregard of it when known—is consistent with the true and spiritual worship of him? But admitting the general statement I have made, concerning the Gifts of God, and his ordinances for the Gospel Church, to be substantially correct; it is not possible to conceive how any organization of that sort could be created at first, or perpetuated afterwards, in the absence of a spirit of believing, trustful, adoring obedience to God; nor to conceive how such an organization when once created, could fail to manifest that spirit, so long and so far as the Saviour of the world was its living head, and the Holy Ghost was the bond of its vital union. But this is the same as to say that the life of the true Church is a life of worship, rendered to God in spirit and in truth.

6. The more we descend to what is special, the more distinct does the idea become, that the worship of God in spirit and in truth, is the habitual manifestation of the life of God in every soul. The wide idea of worship which we cannot separate from that of God, and that of religion—is necessarily determined, as to the nature of the worship, by the nature we attach to the God, and the religion: so that to accept the living God as our God, and his only begotten Son as the Mediator between him and us, determines that we must worship that God, through that divine Redeemer: and that we must do this in the way made known to us by them. And then, when these true worshippers of God,

[1] Eph., iv. 1–25.

in Christ, become organically united, through the headship of Christ, and their communion with each other ; everything that is special in the conception, the nature and end, or the absolute condition of this Body of Christ, shapes and illustrates more and more distinctly, the idea of worship, step by step with the ideas of religion, and of God. And then, when the Gifts which God has bestowed on his Church, under every aspect of it—his Spirit, his Son, and the knowledge of his will ; and the more special Gifts which he has bestowed on it through them—his written word, a ministry, sacraments, an outward organization, all divine ordinances : it is manifest that the whole of these Gifts of God are of that kind, that in proportion as they are received in the love and in the power of them, the worship of the visible Church becomes more distinctly the manifestation of her life, while it also becomes more spiritual in its own nature, and rises to higher forms of truth. And then, when all that God has done for his Church, is concentrated in the ordinances of a particular congregation—a special Christian Church, met for stated and habitual worship—and receiving and manifesting grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; the ordinary form of the spiritual life of the Church, exhibited in this primary and most obvious and permanent aspect of the organization of these royal priests of God—is the worship of God in spirit and in truth. And finally, when we consider these followers of Christ, one by one—and reflect on the personal relation of each to these numerous themes—many of which are infinite ; when we call to mind the innumerable statements of the word of God, touching the manner in which each one is to work out his own salvation, and make his own calling and election sure ; when we look into our own soul, and remember what we once were—how we became what we now are—and by what means we hope to obtain the crown : it seems to me we are ready to set our seal to what our brother Paul has said, and proclaim that they are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh ;[1] ready to respond to our divine Lord, in his own glorious words, God is a Spirit—and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.[2]

7. To make this explanation complete, let us consider more

[1] Phil., iii. 3. [2] John, iv. 24.

carefully the narrowest organic aspect of the subject, in its relation to a particular congregation. It is needless to enquire here, how the worshipping assemblies of God's people may have been constituted and conducted, before the days of Abraham, or even of Moses. This is undeniable, that those Synagogues of the Jews, in which the written word of God was publicly read and expounded, and prayer offered to God, statedly every Sabbath-day; were as much a part of the religious life of God's ancient people, as the temple service was—were probably at least as ancient—and have survived it nearly eighteen centuries. In them, our divine Lord habitually worshipped and taught;—and after the model they furnished, in many respects, his inspired Apostles organized our Christian congregations. Each of these Christian congregations is an elemental and organized portion of the Church visible universal of the Lord Christ: and every one of them, when complete, has everything which is possessed by that universal Church, in its present state: and it is by means of the union of these, that Church assemblies having rule, and a government, are created. Now divine worship in its widest sense, is the specific object of the existence of these particular Churches; and, in the narrowest sense of worship, it is one of their chief objects—as it is their main employment. Such as gladly receive the word of God, are baptized in them. Such as will be saved, the Lord adds to them.[1] To believers and to their seed, are the promises of God herein held forth.[2] To them, Pastors, Elders, and Deacons are given, by Christ;[3] and in the bosom of each one, a court of Christ is created.[4] In this Church, it is the will of God, that his people should statedly assemble on the Sabbath-day, and as often besides as his providence permits, for his solemn public worship, as revealed by himself.[5] And, as parts of that worship, it is the ordinance of God, that public prayer should be offered to him:[6] that his praises should be sung, with grace in our hearts to the Lord:[7] that the word of God should be read, expounded, and preached:[8] that the sacraments of the Christian Church should be duly administered:[9] and that the

[1] Acts, ii. 41, 47. [2] Acts, ii. 39; 1 Cor., vii. 14.
[3] Eph., iv. 11, 12; 1 Tim., v. 17; Acts, vi. *passim.*
[4] 1 Tim., v. 17; Rom., xii. 6–8; 1 Cor., xii. 28.
[5] Acts, ii. 42; xx. 7; 1 Cor., xvi. 2; Heb., x. 25. [6] 1 Tim., ii. ..
[7] Col., iii. 16. [8] Acts, xiii. 15, 27; Titus, i. 9; 2 Tim., iv. 2; 1 Cor., i. 18.
[9] 1 Cor.. xi. 23–26; Matt., xxviii. 18, 19.

people should be blessed from God.[1] Moreover, God has ordained that each particular Church—should, by the Court of his Kingdom erected in its bosom, take care that its members lead blameless and holy lives:[2] and that all I have discussed as appertaining to our New Obedience, as rendered unto God, and our Good Works, as performed towards our fellow-creatures—be truly observed, as becometh saints; and as the chief of all, charity—love to God and compassion for our fellow-men.[3] Now, with such a state of case as this disclosed to us by God himself, in connection with the primitive and most elemental part of the organic life of the Church visible, universal; we are left without any possibility of denying—that the idea of the worship of God pervades the total life and organism of the Church of God; and that the nature of the worship and the nature of the Church, must necessarily harmonize. If God is a Spirit, and is true—then the worship of him in spirit and in truth, is an infallible mark of his true Church.

8. Religion is exhausted, as a matter of contemplation, when we have considered it under the aspect of Faith, the aspect of Duty, and the aspect of Worship. It is in these three aspects that it necessarily affords us, the three infallible marks of the true Church. So when the word of God has taught us infallibly, what we ought to believe concerning him, and what duty he requires of us, there remains nothing to be taught concerning salvation, except the expression of both, in the form of worship. If, therefore, purity of Faith be one infallible mark of the Church of Christ, as I have proved—and if holiness of life be another, as I will prove—neither of which, I suppose, any Christian will deny; then, it is perfectly unavoidable, that purity of worship, must be the remaining mark. And the very terms of the whole science of Christianity, give us the same result. God—man—and the Mediator between them; this is its mighty elemental formula. But Faith in that Mediator, and worship rendered to that God—and Holiness—nourished by both of them, through the grace of which all three are the products; this is the infallible manifestation that Christianity is realized in us, in a form responsive to its mighty elemental formula.

[1] 2 Cor., xiii. 14. [2] Heb., xiii. 17; 1 Thess., v. 12, 13.
[3] 1 Cor., xiii. *passim;* Matt., v. 43–48; vi. 1–4, 19–23.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HOLY LIVING: THE THIRD INFALLIBLE MARK OF THE TRUE CHURCH.

I. 1. Relation of all Righteousness, in Man, to the Law of God.—2. Gospel Holiness: its Relation to Christ—to Faith in Him—and to the acceptable Worship of God.—II. 1. The Reality of Moral Distinctions: the Demonstration they afford that God is the Fountain of all Goodness.—2. Neglect or Perversion of these Moral Distinctions, fatal to all Religions in which either occurs.—3. The indissoluble and eternal Connection of Holiness with Blessedness.—4. The inward Aspect of that Holiness, which infallibly distinguishes the True Church.—5. Unity of that Holiness, as a Mark of the True Church, with each of the preceding Marks.—6. The Unity of the Mystery of Godliness; Goodness the perfection of Knowledge, of Duty, and of Grace.—III. 1. The True Life of the Church, is the Power of the Holy Spirit.—2. Conclusive Effect of the Supremacy of the Supernatural Element, in the Question of the Church.—3. Majesty and Glory of the True Church.

I.—1. To keep and to do all the statutes and judgments of God, is the highest proof of spiritual wisdom and understanding. It has always been required by God as the sum of the whole duty of man—always been declared to be the way of peace and mercy for his people—always been prescribed as the surest evidence of their true faith in Jesus Christ, and their acceptable worship of the most high God.[1] The sum of the instruction which the Apostles had in charge to give, in discipling all nations, was that all should observe all things whatsoever Jesus had commanded them.[2] And the constant doctrine of Jesus was, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.[3] My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.[4]

2. Without holiness no man shall see God.[5] This great truth is involved in every just idea we can form of God and of salvation; and so essential is it in all that the Scriptures intend by

[1] Deut., iv. 1–6; Eccl., xii. 13; Matt., xv. 9; John, xii. 50; vii. 17
[2] Matt., xxviii. 19, 20.
[3] John, viii. 31, 32.
[4] John, x. 27, 28.
[5] Heb., xii. 14

salvation, that nothing therein relating to us is either explicable, or effectual, if we omit or fatally pervert their teaching concerning this. The everlasting righteousness which has been brought in by Messiah the Prince,[1] the righteousness which is of God through the faith of Christ,[2] the righteousness unto which they live who are dead to sin ;[3] this is the righteousness which, together with all goodness and truth, is the fruit of the Spirit,[4] with which the blessed, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, shall be filled —and, in the blessed fruition of which, the pure in heart shall see God.[5] Now, this Gospel holiness—which I have so carefully sought to trace and to disclose—is that which I always intend, when I speak of holy living as a mark of the Church of Christ. For the constant doctrine of the Scriptures is that the just shall live by faith ;[6] and the relation between life, and righteousness, and faith is so close, that in every Christian sense, either of the three necessarily involves the other two. So while true faith is the life of the Church, and true worship is the means of nourishing that life—true holiness is the manifestation of its healthful existence. Faith that rejoices in Christ Jesus, is the living testimony to the work of the Mediator between God and men ; worship rendered unto God in Spirit and in truth, is the testimony to the whole doctrine of God, of grace, and of salvation : and total abnegation of the flesh—that is, true Gospel holiness, is the testimony that the whole doctrine of God and of Christ, is realized in the power of it and the love of it, in the soul of man. God, man, and, between the two, the God-man : this is the divine formula.[7] To worship God in the Spirit, to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and to have no confidence in the flesh : this is the practical result, in the human soul, as explained by God.[8] Purity of faith, spirituality of worship, holiness of life ; this is the manifestation on the part of the Church, which makes it certain, past doubt, that she is the Kingdom of God—the body of Christ—the holy nation. It is to the exposition of this third infallible mark of the true Church, visible, universal, of the Lord Jesus Christ, that this chapter is devoted.

II.—1. In connection with the general subject of the fall and

[1] Daniel, ix. 24.
[2] Phil., iii. 9.
[3] 1 Peter, ii. 24.
[4] Eph., v. 10.
[5] Matt., v. 6, 8.
[6] Hab., ii. 4; Rom., i. 17.
[7] 1 Tim., ii. 5.
[8] Phil., iii. 3.

recovery of man, while discussing various parts of the way of life and our relations thereto ; I have found it necessary to enter somewhat fully, into enquiries touching the moral constitution of man, considered in all the estates disclosed in the word of God. It does not seem to me necessary to repeat, in this place, what I have advanced on that subject ; just as I have already declined repeating here, what I have taught in previous chapters, on the subject of evangelical holiness. But as the immediate relation of the latter topic to the present subject, demanded the brief exposition I have just given of it : so the close connection of the former topic, with the most direct method of illustrating the subject before us, renders a few words of explanation concerning it, important. I observe, therefore, that the reality of moral distinctions is incontestably established, by the moral constitution of man, upon principles as clear as those upon which the reality of physical distinctions is established, by the physical constitution of man. Whether such distinctions do, in fact, exist or not, we are obliged by an ultimate law of our being, to recognize them as real ; nor have we any faculty more intense, more pervading, or more distinctive of our nature, than that which we call *conscience*, by means of which we take cognizance of these moral distinctions. To say we have no conscience, is to contradict the universal consciousness of the human race—as really as to say we are not endowed with reason—or with sight. To admit we have a conscience, but deny that the moral distinctions of which it takes cognizance, have any reality—or existence ; is the same as to admit we have reason, and then deny that there is anything true, or anything false ; or to admit that we have the sense of sight, and then deny that there is anything to see, or any light to see by. To say nothing of the supremacy of the moral sense —and of the overwhelming ruin in which such a race as ours would be immediately engulphed, but for that supremacy : the statement I have made seems to put beyond question, the absolute and ineffaceable existence of morality itself, independently of us, and paramount to our nature. If that be so, the existence of a creator and moral ruler of the universe is certain : and it is in the bosom of the First Cause—the living God—that the source of all good is found.

2. The disregard of these moral distinctions, thus thoroughly fundamental in the spiritual system of the universe ; must be

utterly fatal to the claims of every religious system, in which it exists, to be considered either revealed by God, or suitable for man. No religion can be true which misunderstands the absolute nature of these moral distinctions—which overlooks or misstates the relation of man's moral nature, in its fallen state most especially, to them—which confounds the distinction between good and evil in the very matter of salvation—which shocks man's natural sense of morality—which inculcates that which is wrong in itself—which denies our felt moral depravity, or proposes as a remedy for it, that which is incompetent, that which is false, or that which is evil. In accepting any such religion as true, we outrage the conscience itself—to sanctify which is the chief end of true religion. The ruin which all false religions spread around them, is produced chiefly by their blinding and depraving influence upon the conscience; a ruin analogous to that which would occur, if the supremacy of conscience could be overthrown. And the readiness with which our depraved nature accepts all false religions, is the clearest proof of the disorder of the moral sense of man, of the overpowering force of his religious instincts, of his absolute need of a moral regeneration, and of the total falsity of all religions which cannot accomplish this. In estimating that purity of life which religion, if it be from God, must produce, we are obliged, therefore, even upon grounds of mere reason and natural morality, to reject, indiscriminately, all religions whose faith is inconsistent with virtue and good morals, or whose worship is a snare to the souls of men, or whose life violates the sense or loosens the bonds of duty. This great rule is laid down by the Saviour. By their fruits ye shall know them: and it is expressly laid down to enforce this great duty, Beware of false prophets.[1] In this manner, every false religion is rejected by Christ—upon the ground of the fruit it bears; even before we pass the threshold of the subject. That which promotes sin—that which is drunk with blood—which is polluted by uncleanness—which is rank with imposture—that whose very life is sustained by the death of souls: what madness is greater than to recognize such organized unrighteousness as true religion, because mankind is sufficiently brutal to be led captive by the Devil at his will;[2] given over by God to strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned

[1] Matt., vii. 15–20. [2] 2 Tim., ii. 26.

who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.[1]

3. The connection between virtue and happiness is so immediate, that any attack upon the foundations of morality, is also an attack upon every hope and possibility of blessedness. But whatever is an absolute condition of blessedness for human nature, in any estate, or at any period: is an absolute condition of its blessedness, to all eternity; because human nature preserves its essential identity, through all possible estates. Amongst all the results of experience, not one is more certain—amongst all the meditations of philosophy, none are more clear—amongst all the teachings of the Holy Spirit, nothing is more distinct, than that virtue, purity, holiness, lie at the foundation of human blessedness. All growth in grace, strengthens this divine union: and its bond will become closer in eternity, when grace is swallowed up in glory—closer forever, as we approach nearer to the presence and the measure of God. To make us pure in heart, that we may see God—discern him—know him—have fruition of him, is amongst the chief blessings of true religion, pointed out by the Saviour;[2] and no mark can be more palpable, that any system of religion is not from God, than that it obscures our vision—our fruition of him—by obstructing a life of holiness, and hardening the heart. Both faith and righteousness, which are indissolubly connected with spiritual life, have their seat in the heart;[3] in which is begotten, and out of which must flow, that true holiness, in which the new man is created, after the image of God.[4] Even in its natural state—much more when it has been renewed by divine grace—how full is the testimony of the heart to its own need of this very holiness! Its deep and sorrowful convictions, at every survey of its best emotions; its profound sense of duty, even in the midst of the clearest manifestations of weakness and sinfulness; its intense longings for that it hath not, even under the burden of pollution that robs it of the power of articulate expression of its very wants; and when it has found what its need was, and has been supplied out of God's unwasting fulness—its clear and joyful vision of all that was confused before, and of its God and Father above all, and through all, and in all:[5] can all this mean

[1] 2 Thess., ii. 11, 12; 1 Cor., vi. 9, 10; Rev., xxii. 14, 15. [2] Matt., v. 8.
[3] Rom.. x. 10. [4] Eph., iv. 24 [5] Eph., iv. 6.

anything less than the perfect relation of the divine remedy, to our fatal disease—the perfect accordance between the testimony concerning our previous emptiness and pollution, and that concerning our satisfying fruition of a new and divine holiness? Well may we say, we were sometimes darkness, but now are we light in the Lord. And since the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth; well does it become us to walk as children of light.[1]

4. It is by Revelation from God—outwardly in his word, inwardly by his Spirit—that the soul is made acquainted with the true nature of all these mysteries of God and man. Revealed in that power of the divine word, which is such a glorious peculiarity of the truth of God—and revealed in the power of the Holy Ghost, working by and with that truth, in the human soul: these great mysteries come to us in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.[2] God reveals himself to those to whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,[3] in a peculiar light and with a peculiar power, as the God of all grace—the God who saves penitent and believing sinners by the blood of the everlasting covenant. The purity which is needful, in order to this salvation, is also a most peculiar form of righteousness, and is revealed in a most peculiar manner. For the Gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, reveals the righteousness of God from faith to faith: which Paul first asserts, and then confirms by the perpetual, equivalent truth, The just shall live by faith.[4] Christ, and his righteousness, revealed to us and revealed in us; life, righteousness, and faith—indissolubly united. It is, therefore, a righteousness of such only, as have been renewed in the spirit of their mind: of such only, as have put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts—and have put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.[5] This special holiness of truth—and that the very truth of God—is the only form of righteousness which is available in, or unto, a lost sinner. And this is attainable only in, and through, the Lord Jesus Christ. But of his fulness every penitent and believing sinner receives; and that in a manner, at once so complete and so

[1] Eph., v. 8, 9.
[2] 1 Cor., ii. 4.
[3] Matt., xiii. 11.
[4] Rom., i. 16, 17; Hab., ii. 4
[5] Eph., iv. 22–24; ii. 10.

specific, that all grace in him finds some counterpart responsive to it, in all renewed souls.[1] This is the inward aspect of that holy living, which is an infallible mark of the true Church.

5. This holiness, exhibited as it must be in the wide form of holy living, is the product of the same divine life in man, which has been shown to be manifested in purity of faith, and in true spiritual worship. I have several times pointed out the indissoluble connection of these three marks of the true Church with each other, and the grounds upon which that connection rested, in the very essence of the Gospel. Let me very briefly, disclose the unity between this mark and each of the preceding marks. The divine life which is manifested in evangelical holiness, is of that nature and operates in that manner—whether in individual persons, or in whole communions :—that it cannot commence by means of the New Creation, without saving faith being immediately manifested ; nor can it be sustained or increased afterwards, except in connection with the perpetual exercise of that faith. For the righteousness of God is by faith in Jesus Christ ; and is unto all, and upon all that believe.[2] And it is of God that we are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.[3] But that pure faith makes men pure. For, it not only overcomes the world,[4] but it does this by purifying the heart.[5] And the instrument by which it works in our purification, is love.[6] So that the purity of life which is an infallible mark of the Church of God, is that purity which is manifested by love to God, and love to our neighbour. But the Lord has told us that this is the sum of all the commandments of God—all the law and the prophets hanging thereon.[7] And I have just shown that it is the sum of Gospel holiness. In like manner, holiness imparts to our worship, in whatever sense we use the term, one essential characteristic—which makes it acceptable to God—that is, its quality of true obedience : while, at the same time, it is itself sustained and advanced by all true, spiritual worship. For, whether in the form of the Church, or whether in the assemblies of God's people

[1] John, i. 16–18—*and grace for grace—χαριν, αντι χαριτος*
[2] Rom., iii. 22 ; Phil., iii. 9.
[3] 1 Cor., i. 30.
[4] 1 John, v. 4.
[5] Acts, xv. 9.
[6] Gal., v. 6.
[7] Matt., xxii. 37–40.

statedly met, or in all the parts and particulars of the stated worship of him therein: or whether in the right use of the sacraments he has instituted as signs and seals of the Covenant of Grace; holiness of heart—and by consequence holiness of life, is the very end at which everything aims, and to which everything tends. We can have no just conception of the worship of God, in spirit and in truth, which it is possible to separate, on the one side, from the idea of duty rendered unto God—any more than it is possible to separate it, on the other side, from the idea of belief in God. And so while honour and majesty are before the Lord; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary: and the exhortation is, Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.[1] For out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.[2]

6. There is a wonderful unity apparent in the whole mystery of Godliness—from whatever point of view it is contemplated, or by whatever process it is examined. One of the firmest foundations of faith is the grand and simple truth, that it is with the heart man believeth unto salvation:[3] responsive to which, the Saviour has deduced from all the law and the prophets that most glorious climax, that all duty to God and man, is fulfilled in love.[4] The wisest of mankind, therefore, could utter nothing more profound in its doctrinal import—more pungent in its practical use, than the solemn words, Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.[5] Goodness, then, is at last, the perfection of knowledge, the perfection of duty, the perfection of grace; the nature of man, and the Kingdom of God—find perfection in a common result. When we treat of Justification, it is Faith, and it is Forgiveness, which we are called to contemplate: when we treat of Adoption, it is Hope and the glory of the Kingdom, which burn in our hearts: when we treat of Sanctification, it is Love and God's image perfected in us, that fill the measure of earthly blessedness. And our entrance into the Kingdom—our being replenished with its blessings and its benefits—and our being perfected in its spirit altogether; unitedly do but express, in another form, the great conclusion, Now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity.[6] Nor need we hesitate to add—since the Apostle has done so, But the greatest

[1] Psalm xcvi. 6, 9. [2] Psalm l. 2. [3] Rom., x. 10.
[4] Matt.. xxii. 34–40. [5] Prov., iv 23. [6] 1 Cor., xiii. 13

of these is Charity. And when we examine the whole matter with all thoroughness, in order to ascertain with certainty the infallible marks of the Church; we find ourselves conducted to results precisely corresponding with those reached through so many other processes, and precisely in accordance with the whole analogy of faith. To be pure, is the grand necessity, obligation, and blessedness of the Church. To be holy, according to that peculiar manner of holiness, which is involved in the salvation of sinners by the grace of God; is her first step upwards. To be holy, in perfect goodness—love to God and to man—charity—the greatest of the great graces—is her last step upwards, in her present form. Between these two stand Faith and Obedience, looked at from the practical side; Faith and Hope, looked at from the doctrinal side; for both a boundless Hope and a New Obedience, are exponents of our Adoption into Christ—and Worship is an expression of them both. A pure Faith, a pure Worship, and a pure Life—is the general expression alike of the true relation of saved sinners to an infinitely pure God—and of the true Religion of the Son of God, who is the Saviour of the world. If either of the three is removed, the Religion is destroyed; because the three stand, or fall, together. If they all abide, the Religion is complete. They are, therefore, the infallible marks of the true Church, visible, universal, of the Lord Jesus Christ. And there are no others.

III.—1. The life of the Church of God is most inadequately conceived, if we suppose it is complete when the doctrine is pure, and the order is perfect, and the outward conduct is irreproachable. It is possible for the understanding of man to receive the doctrine of salvation revealed in the Scriptures, while the heart remains unaffected by it, except as by a philosophy. It is possible that the model of the Church should be outwardly exact, in all things, and yet that the torpor of death should cover her fair proportions. It is easy to see that her outward acts might wear a decent conformity to the commandments of God, in the whole round of her great duties; and at the same time, a heartless formality, or a self-righteous Phariseeism, supplant all true love in her bosom. The true life of the Church, is a divine reality; perfectly distinguishable—scarcely capable of being mistaken by such as partake of it. It is a power animating her faith, sustaining her obedience, and nourishing her activity. It is the

fruit of God's Spirit within her. They do not err, who rate this far above all. But they do err fatally, who suppose that this divine power has no necessary connection with the faith, the worship, and the active life of the Church: no necessary connection with her doctrine, her order, and her practice. So far as we know, it has a connection with them all, both absolute and exclusive: nor have we any reason to expect the supernatural interposition of God, in saving any soul, except through his revealed truth; while we know, assuredly, that the divine Spirit does not —will not—quicken men, otherwise than through Jesus Christ, much less in dishonour of his person, his work, or his glory. The faith, the worship, and the life of the Church, which is the fulness of him that filleth all in all, are, therefore, not the power itself; but, precisely in proportion as they are pure, they are fit to manifest the power by which men are saved. And, as far as we know, the power of God unto salvation, is revealed only in the Gospel of Christ, to every one that believeth; and it is only therein that the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; and only thereby that the just live by faith. Taking all things as they are made known to us by God, if the Holy Spirit were withdrawn, there could be no more salvation—no matter what else remained; if divine truth were lost from amongst men, there would be no more operation of the Spirit: if the people of God were all cut off, the Spirit and the word, in order to convert the world, would be obliged according to the divine Œconomy we have, to reconstruct the Church out of penitent and believing sinners saved by grace: and that Church, when reconstructed, would possess the very marks I have demonstrated, and occupy the very position they indicate for her as God's Kingdom in this world. The whole Œconomy of salvation is reducible to this solution: nor does it appear to admit of any other.

2. The supremacy with which the supernatural element of the question of the Church, pervades every part of this discussion, must be obvious to every reader. Nor is it possible to conduct any enquiry, that can be of the least value, upon such subjects, on any other basis. If the religion which we seek to comprehend, is a mere philosophy—nay, if it is any less than a divine revelation; then, of course, it stands in the wisdom of man, and that wisdom must construct it, aided, no doubt, by

such intimations as God may have been pleased to give. But if God has revealed to us, in a manner designed by himself to be complete, a way of salvation which he requires us to accept: then the whole matter stands in the power of God, and must be so treated.[1] Where the revelation stops, the divine power, in its manifestation to us for salvation, also stops: and every attempt on our part to extend the power, is either an attempt to extort a further revelation from God, which is sacrilege—or an attempt to teach God, which is impiety. The patriarchs did not presume to erect the institutions of Moses; nor did Moses presume to bring in that simple grace and truth, which came by Jesus Christ. Even Christ did not set up the new form of his own Kingdom, or write one word of his own glorious Gospel; but he left to the divine Spirit, acting through his inspired Apostles, the completion in both respects of the will of God. How then shall men, without the smallest claim to an extraordinary vocation from God, dare to add one tittle or take away one jot? Nor can it make the least difference, whether we address ourselves to one part or another, of what God has given to us as the perfect expression of his will, concerning our salvation. It is as utterly beyond our competency to institute for God a worship which he ought to accept, as to establish a doctrine concerning him which he ought to approve: a task as much above us to complete the form of his Kingdom, as to improve the method of his grace. We have no knowledge, we have no authority, we have no sufficiency, for any such thing. God alone has them all in infinite fulness. And upon these two truths rests the argument, *à priori*, for all divine revelation. So that we not only discredit the sufficiency of the revelation which God has given us, but call in question the necessity of any revelation at all, as really when we would amend, as when we impeach the faith, the worship, or the life, prescribed by God to his Church. And every act of this sort is the more to be condemned, because God has made known to us so clearly in his word, what he would have us do; that the poor pretext of his silence can be made good, only by holding his truth in unrighteousness, or by handling his word deceitfully. He has spoken all his mind in the matter of our salvation; forbidding us in the beginning, and forbidding us at the end—always under the most terrible penalties—to add unto the word or unto

[1] 1 Cor., ii. 1–5.

the things commanded by him, or to diminish aught from either of them.[1] For besides the injuries we inflict on men, and the corruption we bring into the Church, and the dishonour we offer to the majesty of God, by such acts of presumptuous disobedience; we are also guilty of treason against our Lord the King in Zion, as often as we usurp these high prerogatives of his crown. With reference to ourselves—nothing can bind the faith or conscience of a Christian, in the matter of his salvatian, that is not revealed from God. But nothing is revealed unto salvation, except in Jesus Christ our Saviour. So that where faith, conscience, revelation, and salvation, have no place; there is no Saviour—and can be no Church.

3. This whole doctrine is transcendently glorious to the Church of God. It invests her with the majesty, which springs from her total deliverance from the control of carnal commandments, and from her being clothed with the power of an endless life. Her mission is commensurate with the human race. Its very essence is, to do all good to all. Her own goodness is the measure of her ability to do good. A mission of faith, obedience, and love, accomplished in the power of the divine life by which she lives. Salvation is wrought out through her, in proportion as it is first wrought in her. As she trusts, obeys, and imitates Christ, she manifests in the same degree the purity of her faith, of her worship, and of her life; exhibits the mighty power of God, which works in her trustful and loving heart; demonstrates her entire conformity to the divine will; and thus working out the glory of God on earth, she works out for herself an eternal weight of glory. Does any child of God desire to take from Christ, any part of his dominion over himself? Then why should it be considered possible, that the spouse of Christ would desire any such thing? Does any sanctified soul feel the yoke of Christ to be a heavy yoke? Then why should it be imagined that all sanctified souls should fail to rejoice as the pre-eminence is given to him, in all things? Nor will God endure to be robbed of that which is his. I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God—is the reason given by himself, why the glory, dominion, and worship, should be given only to him; and is rendered as a portion of that unalterable morality, whose foundations are laid in his own being, and which pervades every

[1] Deut., iv. 1–24; Rev., xxii. 18–20.

manifestation of himself.[1] And the last recorded utterance of the redeemed in glory is, As it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia : for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.[2]

[1] Exod., xx. 5.

[2] Rev., xix. 6.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD,

SUBJECTIVELY CONSIDERED.

ARGUMENT OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

This Fifth Book bears to the Fourth, a relation somewhat analogous to that which the Third Book bears to the Second. For the Second Book attempts to demonstrate a Christian, and the Third to demonstrate those personal Offices without which there can be no individual Christianity: while the Fourth Book attempts to demonstrate the visible Church of Christ organized out of those same Christians, and this Fifth Book to demonstrate the Gifts of God to this Christian Church, without which it can have no visible existence. And as in the former case, those individual Offices of themselves prove that he who discharges them does so by the grace of God, and is a true disciple of Christ; so in this latter case, these divine Gifts prove of themselves that the organized body of Disciples of Christ possessing them, does so by the grace of God, and is a true Church visible of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the negative conclusions in the two cases are analogous; namely, that lacking these individual Offices no one can be a true disciple of Christ—lacking these Gifts of God no organized body can be composed of true disciples of Christ, or be his visible Church. So that the demonstration is double in each case, and then general of the whole. The Twenty-Seventh Chapter, which is the First of this Book, is devoted to the three supreme Gifts of God to his Church more especially considered as visible, namely, his Son, his Spirit, and his Word; one large division of the Chapter being occupied with the separate and detailed exposition of each. Concerning the Son it is shown in what sense he is given by God to the Church, over and above the sense in which he is given to each individual Christian, and in what different form he is given to the Gospel Church, as compared with preceding dispensations; what are the mutual results of this as to Christ, and as to the Church—what is the relation between them thus created—what is the position of the Church thus considered—and her consequent glory and blessedness in her witness-bearing and her work. Concerning the Spirit it is shown that all efficiency of the Church is of him as really as all authority is of Christ; the difference in the manner of bestowment, the manner of operation, and the manner of relation to all things, between the Spirit and the Son, is explained; the order of the mysteries of grace, the relation of the Spirit to the work of Christ and to the Gospel Church, and the attestation of everything relating to both, and to all truth and godliness.

by the Spirit, are disclosed; the promise of the Spirit—his outpouring, his manifestation and work, extraordinary and ordinary, the Relation of both to Christ, to the Church, to each other, and to salvation are explicated: and the doctrine of the Spirit and of his relation to the Church is shown to be absolutely vital. Concerning the Word of God, its relation to the Son, the Spirit, and the Church, and its special relation considered as written to the Church considered as visible, are pointed out; the Word and the Church before the former was written, and the latter organized, and again after the former was written and the latter organized, and again after the former was complete and as such bestowed on the Gospel Church, are specially considered: the power of the Word as mere truth, and its further power as the instrument of the Spirit, is disclosed; and the Chapter closes with an appreciation of the written Word considered as a divine Gift to the Visible Church, and of the Gospel Church considered as possessing the supreme Gifts of God just discussed. The Twenty-Eighth Chapter, which is the Second of this Book, discusses the Sabbath-day, the Sacraments, Instituted Worship, Discipline, and Evangelization, as Ordinances given by God to his Church; one large division being devoted to each. The Sabbath is shown to be a perpetual element in the moral system of the Universe, and to be indissolubly connected with the creative, providential, and gracious work of God therein: and its unspeakable importance to man is pointed out. The Sacraments are treated generally, the idea of them, their nature, and use, the ends they answer and promote, being explained; their efficacy is shown to depend on the work of the Divine Spirit, and to be wrought instrumentally by them, in us, by him through our faith in Christ: the number of them and its constancy, their relation to the Church under successive dispensations, Christ's relation to them, and their record of him, are explicated. The Instituted Worship of God is discussed, and the relation of Atheism on one side, and that of spiritual worship of the true God on the other, to our natural convictions is disclosed; the revealed will of God concerning the worship he requires of man is demonstrated; the particulars of that revealed worship, now divinely established in the Gospel Church, are proved, classified, and explained. Discipline, as an ordinance of God, is demonstrated, and its nature and efficacy are explained,—together with the manner and objects of its administration; the nature of Church censures, their relation to the Threatenings of God,—and their execution upon God's erring children, and upon his open enemies are set forth. And finally the Evangelization of the world is shown to be an Ordinance of God obligatory upon the Church; and a brief appreciation of that great endeavour is attempted. The Twenty-Ninth Chapter, which is the Third of this Book, is devoted to a particular discussion of the Sacrament of Baptism, considered in its Nature and Design, the Subjects of it, the Mode of its Administration, and the Apostolic Practice of it. The origin and nature of the sacrament of circumcision, and its relation to Christian Baptism, are explained: the relation of the Baptism of John, and of that administered by the Apostles during the life of Christ, to Christian Baptism is also explained: Christian Baptism is shown to have been instituted by Christ, after his resurrection, as a sacrament of the Gospel Church: the relation of the outpouring of the Spirit to Christian Baptism is disclosed: and the certainty of these divine mysteries, together with their sum, and their relation to

the doctrine of God and of salvation, is proved. In the next place, the relation between Baptism and the blessings of which it is the seal, is exhibited; the title of every one to the seal, who has title to the blessings, is proved; and the right of the infant seed of believers both to the covenanted blessings and to this seal of them, is demonstrated, in each of eleven successive propositions; and the effects, both of the neglect, and of the exercise of this right are shown. Then it is shown that Baptism may be valid, even when its administration is not perfectly regular; Immersion in water, as a commemoration of the burial of Christ, is proved to be a total perversion of this sacrament: the true scriptural relation between baptism and the death and burial of Christ is disclosed: the various senses in which the Scriptures use the word baptism, are set forth, and the right of Christ to fix the sense in which he uses it asserted: and that he did use it—to mean the sacramental application of water to the person, as a sign and seal of our purification by the Holy Ghost, and our ingrafting into Christ is demonstrated in each of five successive propositions. The examination of the Apostolic practice follows, and the great example of Pentecost is shown in each of three successive propositions, and then the great example of Gentile baptism at Cæsarea is shown in each of three successive propositions, and then more briefly other Apostolic examples of every known class are shown, to accord exactly with what was before shown concerning Christ's sense of this sacrament; and the Apostolic doctrine of baptism is deduced. The Thirtieth Chapter, which is the Fourth of this Book, treats in a particular manner, of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, considered in its Institution, Nature, Use, and End; wherein the relation of this Sacrament to the ancient Sacrament of the Passover is explained; the divine account of its institution by Christ is stated; its general nature and ordinary use are disclosed in detail from the Scriptures: the matter of it and elements of it, are pointed out; and how it is a sign and what it signifies, and how it is a seal and what it seals are set forth. Entering more deeply, what the Saviour meant us to understand by saying the cup was the New Testament in his blood, and by saying the bread was his Body broken for us, is carefully examined; the efficacy of the Body and Blood in our spiritual nourishment is disclosed; the relation of this Sacrament to the Worship, the Word, and the Spirit of God, is explicated; and the relation of the constant and sacramental showing of the Lord's death to his Second Coming is pointed out. And finally it is shown how strict is the relation of Christ's sacramental word and action to the Nature and definition of this sacrament; and that of the sacrament itself to the whole question of the Church. The Thirty-First Chapter, which is the Fifth and last of this Book, treats of the Office Bearers of the Gospel Church, and of Church government in their hands. It is shown that all the Office Bearers of the Church both appertain to it, and in a still higher sense to Christ; that the divine origin of the Church, of its government, and of its office bearers is perfectly indisputable, both according to the universal testimony of Scripture, and to the absolute nature of the case; in proof and illustration of all which, the example of the Apostolic Synod constituted at Jerusalem on the question of Gentile circumcision, is carefully examined, and the fact, the nature, and the perpetuity of the government divinely established in the Gospel Church, are demonstrated; the office bearers who constituted that

synod, are shown to have been in part Apostles, but chiefly Elders—Presbyters; and then the nature of the office held by these Elders—Presbyters, and the nature of their right to constitute that synod, and every other tribunal in the Gospel Church, is demonstrated. Then the question of the Church, purely as a question of fact, is taken up at the death of Christ and its condition shown: the effects of the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost, and the events which followed, are traced, and the immediate formation of particular congregations with a tribunal in each, and the nature and composition of that tribunal as a congregational Presbytery composed of Presbyters—Elders, are proved: the union of a number of these congregations with their tribunals—is shown to have constituted a larger body with its tribunal over them all, still composed of Presbyters, and called in the Scriptures a Presbytery; and then the union of all these Presbyteries with all their tribunals and all their congregations with their tribunals—gives us the universal Church and brings us back to its synod already demonstrated; for that is the scriptural name of this high tribunal; and thus the nature, organization, and divine authority of tribunals, Parochial, Presbyterial, and Synodical, all composed of Elders—Presbyters—is proved by tracing the divine progress and development of the Church, as before by a specific divine example. After this the nature of all church power delegated by the Mediator, is analyzed, and its relations to his Prophetic, Priestly, and Kingly offices shown; the result being that the whole power of Regimen is from his Kingly office, and is vested in all Presbyters alike; while the ministry of the word is a delegation from his Prophetic office, and the Stewardship of Divine Mysteries is a delegation from his Priestly office —which two functions—as a power of Order—are added, as to certain Elders, to their power of Rule, and thus two classes in the order of Elders are produced; and it is shown that this power of Order is a *several* power,—while the power of Regimen is a *joint* power; the result being that all rule is not only by tribunals, but all tribunals are constituted of both classes of the order of Elders. The mode of creating office bearers is shown to be by an inward and personal vocation of the particular person, by God to the particular office; which is ascertained by the vocation of the individual by a particular congregation to be its office bearer, and afterwards by the approbation and ordination of the person by a church court: the vital power and importance of this Parochial and Presbyterial vocation—being specially insisted on. Then the offices of Prophet, Evangelist, and Deacon, who are the only remaining office bearers of the Church, whether ordinary or extraordinary—are explained: and the Chapter and Book close with a summary statement, in four successive propositions, of the absolute nature of the government which God has bestowed upon the visible Church; and a slight appreciation of its marvellous origin, progress, and actual position. The difficulty of treating the whole organic life of the Kingdom of God, under the action of so many and such amazing gifts of God, in a few Chapters, and of determining truly and disposing in a lucid order, in so small a compass, so many and such vast topics—is one of the greatest to which the human mind can address itself. To reduce these Chapters to a short connected argument, which will present the whole matter fairly, clearly, and sufficiently—is also very difficult. And now to deduce from that argument its fundamental

results, in a few short propositions is no easy task. Possibly the chief results may be summarily stated somewhat as follows: namely, That the Son, the Spirit, and the Word of God, appertain in a peculiar manner to the visible Church of Christ, under the Gospel dispensation, as the supreme Gifts of God to it:—That the Sabbath day, the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the Instituted Worship of God, the administration of the threatenings of God by Discipline, and the Evangelization of the world, are divine Ordinances obligatory upon the Gospel Church, being gifts of God to it:—That Baptism instituted by Christ must be administered with water by a steward of the mysteries of God, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to the disciples of Christ, and to their infant seed, once only to each person; wherein our purification by the Holy Ghost, our ingrafting into Christ, and the pardon of our sins, are sacramentally signified, and sealed to those who worthily receive it:—That the Lord's Supper, instituted by Christ, must be often celebrated and partaken of by all believers; wherein the bread broken and the wine poured out are the elements, and the broken body and shed blood of Christ are the matter, and all together are the sacrament: the eating and drinking of the bread and wine, and the spiritual receiving of the body and blood of Christ by faith, through the Spirit, the word, and prayer, is a sacramental showing forth of his death, and a communion therein with him, and with each other; all the benefits of Christ, more particularly our redemption by, and our communion in his death, and our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace by feeding sacramentally upon his body and blood, being herein signified and sealed to all who worthily communicate:—That God has bestowed upon the Gospel Church Office Bearers, both extraordinary and ordinary, of whom the former have ceased, the ordinary and perpetual being Elders and Deacons—to whom must be added in a special sense—and as peculiar, Evangelists; that the whole power of Regimen in the Church is a *joint* power, and is wholly in the hands of Elders—amongst whom certain, in addition to their power of rule, labour in word and doctrine, and are stewards of the divine mysteries, both of which are *several* powers, so that there are two classes of the one order of Elders; the power of Regimen being *joint*, all rule is, not by persons, but by Tribunals composed of some of both classes of Elders, all of each class being equal one with another, and the whole equal as Elders; which Tribunals, one above another, Parochial, Classical, Synodical, and Universal, are neither clerical nor laic, but are Presbyterial Courts of the free, spiritual Commonwealth, which is the Church of the Living God.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SUPREME GIFTS OF GOD TO HIS CHURCH: HIS SON: HIS SPIRIT: HIS WORD.

I. 1. The special Gifts of God to his Church: Supreme amongst these, his Son—his Spirit—his Word.—2. Our Responsibility, personal and aggregate: corresponding bestowal of these divine Gifts.—3. Special Gift of the Son of God to the Church: immediate mutual Results.—4. Nature and Effect of the relation between Christ and the Church thus created.—5. The Condition of the Church, considered as possessing Christ.—6. The Holy Church Catholic—the Communion of Saints—the Forgiveness of Sins.—7. The true God and Eternal Life.—8. The Glory and Blessedness of the Church, in her Witness-bearing, and her Work.—II. 1. Gift of the Holy Ghost: all Authority in Christ—all Efficacy from the Spirit.—2. Difference, in the manner of bestowment; and the manner of operation; and the relation of the Son and the Spirit to:—(*a*) Human Nature:—(*b*) The Plan of Salvation:—(*c*) The Church:—(*d*) The World.—3. The order of the Mysteries of Grace, with respect to the Gift of the Holy Ghost.—4. Relation of the Spirit to the Work of Christ, and to the Gospel Church.—5. The Saviour, the Church, the Truth, and the Mystery of Godliness, all attested by the Spirit.—6. The Promise of the Father: the day of Pentecost.—7. Difference in the manifestation of the Spirit: extraordinary manifestations: Their relation to the Church.—8. Saving manifestation of the Spirit: Its relation to his extraordinary manifestations.—9. The Doctrine of the Spirit, and his relation to the Church, vital.—III. 1. Gift of God's Word: Its relation to the Church, and the preceding Gifts: Relation of the written Word to the Visible Church.—2. The Word, before and after it was written: the Church, before and after it was organized: General Exposition.—3. The Gospel Church—and the Sacred Scriptures.—4. The Efficacy of God's Word, considered merely as Divine Truth: its further Efficacy when savingly used by the Holy Ghost.—5. Appreciation of the written Word, considered as a Divine Gift to the Church.—6. Appreciation of the Church, considered as possessing these Supreme Gifts of God.

I.—1. I HAVE endeavoured to trace the principles upon which the divine idea of the Church, and its permanent and visible existence are disclosed in the Word of God—and to make, not only its nature and end plain, but the immense truths also which give it vitality, and the infallible Marks which distinguish it. The course of the orderly treatment of the subject, conducts us next to the consideration of those *Divine Gifts* which God has bestowed upon his Church, thus created, organized, and made

permanent in this apostate world. Gifts, every one of which is a proof of his love, every one a manifestation of his wisdom, and the whole united an infinite dowry ; in the enjoyment of which the Lamb's wife is shown to be the delight of God and the glory of his universe, and the use of which is the means of the deliverance of his universe from the curse and pollution of sin. Amongst these Gifts there are three, which so immeasurably transcend the rest, and, indeed, so exceed all that the heart of man could have conceived, that the very Salvation which they alone could have conferred, seems to human reason an object unworthy of them. It is only as we comprehend that unsearchable love and grace and mercy are the foundation of such gifts, and that the highest glory of God, as well as the endless blessedness of the universe, is involved in the results they will produce ; that we can see it to be capable of belief that God has given his Son to die for his Church, his Spirit to dwell continually amidst its sorrows and its sins, and his Word, made known through so much anguish of his most beloved children, to be a light and power and joy to those so utterly unworthy of it. Yet these very gifts are so entirely the very essence of salvation, that it is impossible to explain, or ever to conceive, any part of it, without the perpetual presence of them all. Of necessity, therefore, they have been continually held up to view, in all I have said. Nevertheless, the special aspect in which we now encounter them, demands a particular statement concerning them.

2. The personal responsibility of every human being, whether to God, to individuals like himself, or to those public authorities, of whatever kind, to which he may be subject ; is the most fundamental result of our personal existence, as rational and moral creatures. It is far, however, from being the only result in the nature of responsibility, to which the circumstances of our existence may give rise. As a member of a household, of a body politic, of the Church, nay, as a member of the great human family, or one of the particular races which compose that great unity ; every human being is liable to suffer and to be blessed, and that out of all proportion to his personal share of responsibility, for that which brought him happiness or misery. This aggregate responsibility is as real, as our personal responsibility ; and can, no more than it, be overlooked or evaded.—In like manner, the Gift of the only begotten Son of God, the Gift of

the Holy Ghost, and the Gift of the Divine Word, has, each, a general as well as a personal relevancy, in the dispensations of God. The gift of each of them to the individual children of God, and the gift of each of them in organizing these children of God, under Messiah, through the Holy Ghost, into the divine kingdom now held forth as the Gospel Church : has been already sufficiently considered. But there is, also, the gift by God of each of them to the Church contemplated as the Body of Christ, in a sense different from any, that it has been hitherto necessary to state very explicitly. Nay, there is a gift of each of them by God, to the whole family of man considered merely as such : which we are apt to overlook, because it does not result in salvation, but which is, nevertheless, by far the greatest bestowment which God makes to our race. For it is possible, that of whole nations and races, not an individual might sufficiently regard the message of salvation, the admonitions of the Spirit, and the love of Christ, to believe, repent and be saved : while yet these divine agencies might so enlighten their darkness, and so rebuke their sins, and so diffuse a real power for what is good, that all other blessings given to them might be insignificant, compared with these. To a certain extent all speculative believers in Christianity, and all nominally Christian nations, are examples of this very mercy of God : this efficacy of these divine gifts to the world. But it is in the more strict sense of their bestowment, namely,—upon the Church of Christ, that I am now considering them.

3. He whom God has raised from the dead, and set at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come : he under whose feet God has put all things, and who is head over all things : he it is whom God has given to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.[1] He filleth all in all : and the Church is his fulness—because it is his body. It is the Son who made all things and who rules and governs all things.—As Mediator of the covenant of grace, as Head of the Church, all things are still under his feet : things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth—things present and things to come. He, the glorified God-man, that liveth, and

[1] Eph., i. 20–23.

was dead, and is alive forevermore, in whose hands are the keys of death and hell : has been given by God to this Church, of which, having redeemed it with his most precious blood, he is the Lord and Head.[1] Nor is it difficult to understand the nature of the claim, which the Son of God has on the believer whom he has redeemed from hell, and made a member of his mystical body forever ; nor, on the other hand, to understand the nature of the claim which the believer has in that divine Saviour, given to him by God, and to whom his soul is united in the bond of an everlasting covenant. In like manner, the title of the Lord Jesus is clear and perfect, to that Church which he so loved that he gave himself for it, which he makes worthy to partake of his own glory and blessedness, and upon which he has staked his renown : and on the other hand, the Church which has given itself to Christ to be his Bride, and which can produce proofs the most tender and the most august, that he has redeemed her, purified her, and owned her for his Spouse ; has such a claim upon Christ her Lord, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate her from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus her Lord.[2]

4. Our want of faith and our sense of personal unworthiness, cause us to shrink from the full acceptance of God's plain declarations, and from the unavoidable result of our own firmest beliefs and convictions. How is it possible for the Saviour to have a people, unless his people have a Saviour ? How can God give a kingdom to his Son, without giving his Son to that kingdom ? He does both. He gives to his Son an eternal kingdom : to his people an almighty Saviour. And though, as yet, we see not all things put under him, we have seen that he who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, has been crowned with glory and honour :[3] we know that the heavens must receive him until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began :[4] and we need no more doubt that the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, than if we beheld the heavenly multitudes

[1] 1 John, iii. 1 ; iv. 10 ; Rom., v. 8–10 ; viii. 32.
[2] Rom., viii. 39.
[3] Heb., ii. 9.
[4] Acts. iii. 21.

rejoicing over this assurance, and saw the four-and-twenty Elders fall upon their faces before God, as they cry, We give thee thanks, oh ! Lord God Almighty, which art, and which wast, and which art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.[1]

5. It is manifest, that as the very existence of the Church hangs on her relation to Christ, and his relation to her : the gift of Christ to her involves, implicitly, every other gift which that may draw after it. Wherefore, the manner in which she receives, cherishes, and uses this supreme gift, must be decisive of the influence which every other gift of God will exert upon her, and upon the universe through her. Christ is her life : and her only hope of appearing in glory, is that when Christ shall appear, she also shall appear with him.[2] He not only shows her the way : he is the Way. He not only teaches her the truth : he is the Truth. He not only conducts her to life : he is the Life.[3] Having said this, making himself all in all : he adds—precluding everything else, No man cometh to the Father, but by me. Whatever of wisdom, or righteousness, or sanctification, or redemption, the Church can enjoy or communicate, she possesses not only by but in Christ : for he is made of God unto her, not only the method by which these wonderful gifts are bestowed, but in the highest possible sense, the very things themselves.[4] God manifest in the flesh, is the most comprehensive statement of the sum of Christianity : and Christ in his person, his work, and his glory, is its concrete form, and its infinite essence, and its almighty power. Christianity may exist in permanent supernatural records : it may live, as an activity, in the hearts of believers : it may be proclaimed as a rule of life to all nations : it may be taught as a science in the schools : it may pervade the earth as a perfect system of spiritual truth : but it is in Christ himself that his undefiled Bride possesses it absolutely. She possesses him as her only Mediator with God—her Immanuel, Prophet, Priest, and King : the author and finisher of her faith—her very present help in every time of need—her glory unto her, and her light to enlighten all nations : her final judge, deliverer, and rewarder for all she has done and suffered for his name—her eternal and satisfying portion in the blessedness of the life to come. All the

[1] Rev., xi. 16, 17.
[2] Col., iii. 4.
[3] John, xiv. 6.
[4] 1 Cor., i. 30.

while that she thus possesses him as her own, he, her Head and Lord, is the Creator of the universe, by the word of whose power all things were made: the infinite source of all life, and light, and truth, and goodness: the infinite Ruler who controls and directs all things by the word of his wisdom: the infinite Benefactor, from whom all blessings flow, and through the word of whose grace Salvation is bestowed on lost sinners! Glorious Church! Transcendently glorious Saviour!

6. It was with good reason that the ancient, comprehensive and universal symbol of the Christian Church, expressed conspicuously amongst its fundamental propositions such articles as these: I believe in the holy catholic Church—I believe in the communion of saints—I believe in the forgiveness of sins The earliest and probably most rational form of the first of these three statements was—not that I believe *in*—but I believe the Church. Either way, the conviction may well be cherished and asserted, that she, in the midst of whom God dwells, shall never be moved: and that notwithstanding the malice of devils and wicked men, the gates of hell shall not prevail against her.[1] Nor can it be doubted, that while she holds fast to Christ, she will also hold fast by the truth, which he himself is: and that as the common mother of all believers, she will know and testify the doctrine of God, in proportion as she walks according to his divine will.[2] Pure in Faith, true and spiritual in the Worship of God, and holy in Life, she needs must be, so long as she possesses Christ. Nor can there be any uncertainty touching the universal duty of the Communion of Saints. For the very organization of the visible Church, and every ordinance of God which separates it from the world, presents these two conspicuous aspects; that therein is a proof of God's rejection of the world, and therein his saints constantly profess, that as the brethren of Christ, they are brethren. For it is not possible for them to be united to their common Head by faith, without being united to each other in love.[3] But one of the highest obligations of Christian love, as well as one of its clearest manifestations, is the perpetual endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace: since we know that we are one body, and have one hope of our calling, through one

[1] Psalm xlvi. *passim*; Matt., xvi. 15–18.
[2] Gal., iv. 26, 27; John, vii. 17.
[3] Col., i. 18; Matt., xxiii. 8–10.

Lord, one Spirit, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.[1] Nor is this communion of Saints less important in itself, than it is clear in its grounds and obligations. For whether we consider the nature of the case, or the plain intimations of the Scriptures, there is no ordinary possibility of Salvation, out of the Church of Christ.[2] For the forgiveness of Sin, which is the third point, and which the Church has in charge to proclaim, in the name of Jesus, to every creature, as the very essence of the Gospel unto them: and in the reality of which, we profess our trust, through the means revealed in the Gospel: has no existence whatever, except in connection with the person and work of Christ. It is by her ministry, that proclamation of this forgiveness of sin, is made to fallen men: it is by her ordinances, that this forgiveness is sealed to penitent sinners: it is through her worship that they are built up in the sense and the fruits of it: it is the Saviour, the Spirit, and the Word, which are God's supreme gifts to her, whereby any possibility exists that God can be just, and justify the ungodly. When we say, therefore, that we believe in the holy catholic Church: and immediately add, that we believe in the communion of saints, and in the forgiveness of sins; we give utterance to the most vital truths touching the nature and office of the Church, considered as in possession of the divine Redeemer, as God's unspeakable Gift.[3]

7. I think I have shown conclusively, in another place, that the salvation of sinners is inconceivable upon any supposition of the mode of the divine existence, materially different from that revealed to us: and on the other hand, that the plan of salvation actually revealed to us, is incomprehensible, except on the supposition that the mode of the divine existence revealed in connection with it, is that of three Persons in one Essence. What is commonly called the doctrine of the Trinity, is therefore, at the foundation of all practical godliness, as well as of all exact knowledge concerning God, and all intelligible exposition of the life and immortality brought to light in the Gospel. This makes it very wonderful, that this great doctrine should have been considered a mystery of that kind, that can have no immediate relation to the life of God in the human soul. But when it is so considered, it makes it very plain why systems of The-

[1] Eph., iv. 1–6.
[2] Acts, ii. 47; iv. 14; xi. 21–24.
[3] 2 Cor., ix. 15; James, i. 17.

ology should be as completely emptied of all spiritual unction, as systems of mere Philosophy: and why so much, of what is meant for evangelical preaching, should be little more than pious rhapsodies, or little better than ethical disputations. The Son of God given to the Church, is the true God and eternal life.[1] And the incontrovertible foundation of the whole mystery of godliness—is God manifest in the flesh.[2] Nor can it be called in question, without taking down the whole fabric, and rendering nugatory every remaining support on which it rests. For why should the Spirit justify, or the unseen world obey, or the Church proclaim, or the human race accept, or heaven receive in triumph: a Saviour who neither did, nor could, deliver a single soul from death: and concerning whom, every one of these sublime realities becomes an utter nullity, the instant it ceases to be true—that he is God manifest in the flesh.

8. The very existence of the Church, then, considered as the possessor of this transcendent gift of God, is to the end that she may vindicate to the universe the true doctrine of Christ: and therein the true doctrine of the divine being and perfections. In the very preaching of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and in all attempts to make men see the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world, had been hid in God; it is the intent of God, that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known, by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.[3] No wonder then that Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it: no wonder that he sanctifies and cleanses it, and that he will present it to himself, a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but holy and without blemish.[4] By means of it, the universe will be taught all those infinite realities concerning God, his perfections, his works and his purposes, now revealed in his word, which otherwise had remained forever hidden; now seen in part, and darkly as through a glass, and known in part—but when that which is perfect is come, then to be seen face to face, to be known by us even as we ourselves are known.[5] And in the process of this unspeakably glorious development, the infinite Goodness and Justice of God, his unsearchable Grace, and

[1] 1 John, v. 20. [2] 1 Tim., iii. 16. [3] Eph., iii. 8–10.
[4] Eph., v. 25, 27. [5] 1 Cor., xiii. 9, 12.

his immaculate Holiness, will shine forth to all eternity in the salvation of his elect, the perdition of Devils and ungodly men, the purgation of the universe from the pollution of sin, the recapitulation of all things in the Son of God as the Saviour of the world, and the everlasting reign of blessedness! Is it possible to exaggerate the position of such a Church, with such a Saviour, and such a mission? Is it possible to exalt, unduly, that Gift of God to this Church, whereby her place in such a scheme, of such a God, is at once assured, and made effectual to such results?

II.—1. It behooves to treat next of the Gift of the Holy Ghost. And the most obvious fact concerning his indwelling is, that the efficacy of every act and every function of the Church, depends as absolutely upon him, as the authority of every one does upon Christ. Whatever the Church does, derives whatever validity it has from the approval of Christ: whatever force it has from the work of the Holy Ghost. Without the former everything she does is a mere usurpation: without the latter, it is a mere nullity. All that has been advanced concerning the knowledge of the mystery of God's existence and purposes, as developed through the Church, by means of the gift to her of the Son of God to be the Saviour of the world: is equally true, according to its own manner, of the gift of the divine Spirit to the Church to be the Sanctifier, alike of her, of her children, and of her acts. The fitness of her children to partake of the blessings she is capable of bestowing on them, as well as their fitness to be the instrument of bestowing these same blessings upon the world: depends upon the efficacy of the work of the Spirit, in each one of them. And the ability of the Church to bless, either her children or the world, depends upon the efficacious working of the same divine Spirit, in her own bosom. And again, the efficacy which abides in her acts, her ordinances, her sacraments, her communion of Saints, her exercise of discipline, her proclamation of truth, her continued supplications, and her abounding charities: results, absolutely, from the presence and power of the Holy Ghost.

2. There is, however, a great difference in the manner of bestowment, between the gift of the Son, and that of the Spirit. The Son is given simply, freely, and sovereignly, in the covenant of God's eternal love. The Spirit is given not only as the prom-

ised, but as the purchased Spirit. Christ did not give himself for his Church, because the Spirit would sanctify the Church: but the Spirit sanctifies the Church, because Christ has purchased it with his blood. It is the work of the Son, which draws after it the work of the Spirit: the Gift of the Son, upon which the gift of the Spirit depends. He is sent from the Father and the Son: and his coming is the crowning proof of the glorification of the Son, and of the certainty of the eternal triumph of divine grace.[1] There is a great difference, also, in the manner of operation. For, on the one hand, the operation of Christ is external to us: while on the other, the operation of the Spirit is internal with us. Or to express this difference in other words; the operation of Christ is specially with God, in reference to us; while that of the Spirit is specially in us, with reference to Christ. The work of Christ changes our estate and relations towards God: that of the Spirit changes our nature in a way of conformity to God.—Still further, there is a great difference between the relation of the Son and that of the Spirit, to human nature, to the plan of Salvation, to the Church, and to the world. Thus:

(*a*) As to human nature, the immense difference is, that the Son has taken our nature into personal and eternal union with the divine nature: and in that manner human nature, in its totality, becomes partaker with the divine nature. But the Spirit, remaining separate from and free of any personal union with human nature, so renews that nature in the divine image in every individual who is elect of God and redeemed by Christ: that all of them are made partakers of the divine nature, and are filled with all the fulness of God.[2]

(*b*) As to the plan of Salvation, the difference is, that Christ as the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace, has actually wrought it out as God-man, in his estate of Humiliation, and administers it as God-man, in his estate of infinite Exaltation. While the Spirit, continuing simply God, applies the whole work of Christ and makes it all effectual, through the merits and in the name of Christ, quickening, enlightening, sanctifying, and comforting the Church, and all her children, by means of what Christ has done and now administers.[3]

[1] Acts, ii. *passim*. [2] 2 Pet., i. 4; Eph., iii. 19. [3] Rom., viii. 1–17.

(*c*) As to the Church, the difference is, that the relation of the Son is that of elder brother to every child of the God and Father of all ; that of husband, head and Lord to the body of Christ, which they unitedly compose ; that of Mediator of the eternal Covenant, and as such the Prophet, Priest, and King in Zion : who having accomplished all that appertained to him in humiliation, now administers from the throne of God all that appertains to his estate of exaltation. While the relation of the Holy Ghost to the Church is, that he is the Vicar of Christ here actually and divinely present with her, and with all her children : working in them to will and to do according to the good pleasure of God, as manifested in Jesus Christ. Which he does with authority so plenary, that to resist and grieve him is to shut ourselves out from Christ ; and to blaspheme against him, is the same thing as to make our bed in hell ; while to honour, love, and obey Christ is the infallible means of increasing the gifts and graces of the Spirit, to the greater glory, through the Church, of her divine Lord.[1]

(*d*) As to the world, the difference is, that the Son, who made it and all that is therein by the word of his power, and who is able to save it by the word of his grace, rules it with infinite dominion as head over all things, and head of the Church ; by his revealed will in the Scriptures commanding all men to believe and repent that they may be saved, and making known to the Universe, through his Church, his manifold wisdom ; by his secret will, upon which his adorable providence proceeds, conducting all things to the infinite issue which God purposed in himself, from all eternity. While the Spirit has to the same fallen world, the relation of its divine Reprover, convincing it of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not in Christ ; of righteousness, because Christ is gone to his Father, and is seen no more ; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. All the while being the Spirit of truth—glorifying Christ—and comforting his Church and his brethren, and guiding them into all truth.[2]

3. All the promises, mercies and gifts of God, are in Jesus Christ. Out of him God is a consuming fire to fallen creatures. The name of Jesus is the only name given under heaven amongst men, whereby we must be saved. Still, there was a reason,

[1] John, xiv. 15,–17 ; 1 John, iii. 23, 24

[2] John, xvi. 7–15.

which God has clearly stated, which led him to bestow on fallen man the unspeakable gift of his only begotten Son ; and we must beware lest we fall into the error of supposing, that it was this gift itself which produced God's purposes of mercy to us. It is not because he has given his Son to the world, that God so loves the world ; for then, while the reason for the love, after the gift, might be clear, no motive for the gift itself would be exhibited. The method of the unsearchable riches of God's grace, as explained by himself is, that Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it ;[1] but that God, who is rich in mercy, not only so loved us, that on account of that great love he quickened us together with Christ, even when we were dead in sins ;[2] but this amazing love of God towards us, was manifested in the very fact that he sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.[3] And Jesus himself, when expressly recounting the grounds and objects of his coming in the flesh, says that it was God's love for the world, that caused him to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life.[4] This, then, is the order of these mysteries of divine grace ; the infinite beneficence of God, is the source of our salvation ; this manifested itself in the unsearchable love he bore to fallen sinners of the human race ; this love exhibited itself in the eternal covenant of grace between the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; the outbirth of this eternal Covenant is the whole Mediatoral work of Immanuel, with all the results thereof ; the sending of the Holy Spirit, upon the glorification of the Mediator, after his work of humiliation was over, was the immediate result both of that glorification, and of the eternal covenant ; of which sending of the Spirit, the actual result was the Gospel Church, together with all it has received with the Spirit, and by means of it ; and the general and certain result, complete salvation by Jesus Christ, and the total exclusion of sinners from God's mercy, except through him, by the Holy Ghost.

4. This divine exposition clears the whole relation of the Spirit to the work of Christ on one side, and to the Gospel Church on the other, of all obscurity. The Spirit considered as the author of the New Creation, under all possible aspects of that creation, has relation to the Godhead as the third Person

[1] Eph., v. 25. [2] Eph., ii. 4, 5. [3] 1 John, iv. 9. [4] John, iii. 15.

thereof, to the covenant of grace as a party thereto, and very especially to the Son considered as the Mediator of that covenant; but considered in a special manner as the gift of God to the Gospel Church, the Spirit has direct and inseparable relevancy to the work of Christ as the Saviour of sinners. The operation of the Spirit, therefore, through the Church, and the doctrine of the Spirit in the Church, must depend, always, upon the position of the Church with reference to the person and work of Christ; that is, upon the amount of its actual knowledge of the Redeemer, and the state of its actual faith concerning him. For while it is universally true, that all who are saved, are so by means of the Covenant of Grace, and, therefore, through the merits of Christ, applied to them by the Holy Ghost; still, the clearness, the fulness, and the power of any particular dispensation, or age, or saint, with reference to the Holy Ghost, could not, in the nature of the case, exceed the actual knowledge of Christ, and the actual faith thereby possible in him. And we are thus furnished with an explanation of all those differences observable in the manifestation of the Spirit, under successive dispensations of the Church, and during different periods, and even in different individuals under the same dispensation. Whatever views we may see fit to hold concerning the sovereignty of divine grace, or the ability of man to that which is acceptable to God; it is certain that all the manifestations of that grace of God, which bringeth salvation, are by means of the revelation of Jesus Christ to us and in us; both of which are accomplished only by the divine Spirit.[1]

5. As soon, then, as it is admitted that the Gospel Dispensation is more clear and powerful, than the dispensations which preceded it; there remains no possibility of doubting that the gift of the Spirit under it exceeds, in the same degree, all that went before. The more of Christ, the more of the Spirit also. So that what took place on the day of Pentecost, and what has been taking place ever since; is no more than is inevitable, if the resurrection and ascension of the Saviour, be once admitted: no more than the ancient prophets had foretold: and Jesus had taught his Apostles in the most explicit manner, to await it as their unction for their great ministry.[2] For the Church of the living God is the pillar and ground of the truth: and however

[1] Tit., ii. 11–15; iii. 3–7.

[2] John, xvi. 7–16; Acts, i. 3–9; ii. 14–33.

great may be that mystery of godliness which is the sum of that blessed truth, the elements which compose it are beyond all controversy. For the sum both of the truth and of the mystery, is revealed as contained in these six incontrovertible propositions, namely: God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.[1] Of these six propositions, five are, in a manner expletive of the first. The second is to the effect, that the whole work of the Holy Spirit is unto the whole person, work and glory of the God-man—one vast, perpetual, perfect justification. And so the Saviour, the Church, the truth, and the mystery of godliness, are all divinely attested by the Spirit: and the ends designed in all are made complete and effectual, through him.

6. In a peculiar manner, therefore, the Church of God, after the day of Pentecost and until the second coming of the Son of man, is a Dispensation of the Holy Ghost. It is a Dispensation administered by the glorified Redeemer, and executed by the Divine Spirit, through grace and truth,—and as a Gospel; and is declared by the word of God to be far more glorious in all respects, than any that has preceded it: amongst other things, in the completeness of our knowledge of God and of Christ, and the corresponding power, fulness, and extent of the saving work of the Holy Ghost.[2] Nor is anything in the teachings of Christ more explicit than what relates especially to this subject: anything in the divine record concerning the establishment, and early life of the Christian Church, more distinctly explained. It is expedient for you, said Jesus, that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.[3] And then he explained, as I have before shown, how this promised Spirit would glorify him, both as he would be the Reprover of the world, and the spirit of truth in all believers: and added the emphatic promise of his own return—the great promise of the New, as his advent was of the Old Testament.[4] And amongst his last words to his Apostles were these, Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.[5] And on the day of Pentecost, when the

[1] 1 Tim., iii. 15, 16

[2] 2 Cor., iii. *passim*.

[3] John, xvi. 7.

[4] John, xvi. 16; Col., iii. 4; 1 John, iii. 2.

[5] Luke, xxiv. 49; Acts, i. 3, 4; Joel, ii. 28; Isa., xliv. 3.

great promise was fulfilled, Peter standing undismayed amidst the overwhelming proofs of God's immediate presence, explained to the wondering multitude gathered around him in the temple from every quarter of the earth, the great miracle and the great truth it attested. This, said he, is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh. This Jesus, whom ye have taken and with wicked hands have crucified and slain, God hath raised up, whereof we are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.[1] It is added most significantly, by the sacred historian, that the same day about three thousand souls gladly receiving the word, were baptized and added to them. And from that to this, and from this day onward, as long as these *last days* shall continue, in the sense divinely limited: the outpouring of God's Spirit upon all flesh, is the promise of the Father upon which the continuance of the Church depends: and from which Joel, and Peter, and Paul, each contemplating that promise from a different point of view, unite in drawing the same grand conclusion of practical grace, Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.[2] And with this agrees the wide declaration of John; that the life which was in Christ, was not only the light of men: but was the true light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.[3] Alike in duration, in extent, and in efficacy, the Promise of the Father, the Redemption of the Son, and the Work of the Spirit, go hand in hand across all these last days, during whose continuance the Gospel Church has in charge, to preach the gospel to every creature.[4]

7. There is a distinction to be made between the manifestations of the Spirit. For though every manifestation of him is a gift of God, and every one is in order that they also receive it may profit withal: yet there are diversities of gifts by the same Spirit, differences of administration by the same Lord, diversities of operation by the same God, which worketh all in all. And the body also is one—though its members like its gifts, be both numerous and diverse. All are baptized in one body, by one

[1] Acts, ii. 16, 17, 32, 33.
[2] Joel, ii. 32; Acts, ii. 21; Rom., x. 13.
[3] John, i. 8. 9.
[4] Mark, xvi. 15.

Spirit—all are made to drink into one Spirit—everything being wrought by one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. This distinguishing peculiarity of our divine religion, and of the power which gives it all its vitality, has been clearly and systematically explained by the Spirit himself.[1] I have already pointed out that every operation of the Spirit that has relation to the covenant of grace, has also immediate relevancy to Christ: and that his saving operations bear a direct relation to the clearness and fulness of our knowledge of Christ. But it is to be borne in mind that some of the greatest and most indispensable operations of the Spirit, considered as under the covenant of grace, and as immediately relevant to Christ, and as directly indispensable to the Church, and to the salvation of men: are not of that kind which disclose him as the indwelling life of the Church, or which disclose him as the Quickening Spirit in the human soul, leading it into all truth, working in it all holiness, and diffusing through it divine love and peace. These manifestations are distinguished by calling them Extraordinary. Examples of them, having immediate connection with the gift of the Spirit to the Church by God, are the most remarkable of all that are revealed to man. It was in one of these that the Apostles of the Lord received the Spirit, as the promise of the Father, so signally announced by Christ: and through his unction were anointed and qualified for their great work, as the immediate founders of the Gospel Church. It was in one of these, that they and the other servants of Jesus Christ, who spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, who had so long withheld all manifestations of this kind: made those divine utterances, which are recorded in the New Testament Scriptures, wherein the revelation of God is completed. It was in one of these, that miraculous power was added to miraculous authority and miraculous insight: whereby, through signs and wonders and gifts of the Holy Ghost, the authority of the action, the truth of the utterance, and the fitness of the persons chosen by Christ, were all divinely attested. It has seemed good to the Head of the Church, that these manifestations of the Holy Ghost, should be permanently continued only in their effects. And the whole career of the Church since they ceased to be made, sufficiently attests how thoroughly her very existence de-

[1] 1 Cor., xii. *passim.*

pended on their bestowal at first : and how completely all her fitness still depends, in their permanent effects, upon their original reality and efficacy.

8. But it is by the saving operation of the Holy Ghost, that all Extraordinary Manifestations of himself, can be savingly realized in the soul, and by the Church. The truth revealed by inspired men, remains ; the work of the Apostles in taking down the fabric of the preceding dispensation, and reconstructing the Church, also remains ; the signs and wonders, and diverse miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost are no less real now, than when they were first manifested. The whole of these effects of the Extraordinary Manifestations of the Spirit, are made efficacious to us for salvation, precisely in the same manner they were made efficacious to those who personally witnessed them : in all instances not by the Extraordinary Work of the Spirit which produced them, and which has ceased from the Church ; but by his gracious, quickening, enlightening, and sanctifying work, still powerfully wrought. And the mode in which the merits of Christ are applied to men, by the Holy Ghost ; and the efficacy which he gives to the preached Gospel, and to all the ordinances of God ; are exactly the same, as when the Church manifested her early life in her present form, amidst miracles and inspiration under the teaching and rule of the Apostles of the Lord. In addition to these we have long centuries of God's most glorious providence developed to his Church—and of his wonderful working in the souls of men. The divine and saving element provided in the gift of the Holy Ghost, is permanent and constant ; sovereign, always, in the actual operation. The Extraordinary element, provided in the divine gift—not permanent in its manifestation, but permanent in the effects of that manifestation : which also are made efficacious, through the manifestation which is permanent. And those effects survive through all generations—and upon every generation is accumulated, besides, all the treasures of practical knowledge and grace, which all preceding generations yield : these last accumulating in force, under the continually increasing proofs of the presence and power of God.

9. The relation of the Holy Spirit to the Church is, therefore, in every sense vital : and the doctrine and life of the Church with reference to this great gift of God, are completely decisive of its state. Independently of the Spirit of God, there can be

no Christian Church—no Christian man. It was so always. But under the present Dispensation, there is an emphasis in this great truth, derived from all that is peculiar to it, in addition to all that is common to every dispensation. And it is the more important that this should be carefully considered by every believer, because the doctrine of the Spirit, in itself and with reference to the Church, is continually assailed, from the most opposite quarters, and upon the most diverse grounds. Nor is there any point upon which the truth and the Church can be assailed, under more deceptious appearances of every sort; nor, on the other hand, any point upon which all possible assaults can be more effectually resisted, as soon as they are disclosed, both by the everlasting testimony of God, and by the inward convictions of every one of his children, and by the true life of the Church itself. It is here, therefore, that the Church is most secure when she lives near to God—most exposed when she sinks into indifference, or is carried away by fanaticism. The more she cherishes and uses this great gift, the more she increases while she scatters; and the more she withholds both its diligent use, and its free bestowment, the more she tends to poverty. The waters of eternal life are free for the whole family of man. The Spirit saith to all that are athirst—come! Let the Bride, also, say—come! As she leads her children beside the still waters, and teaches them that they are the waters of eternal life; let it dwell in her heart that the last exhortation of her Lord is, to be urgent that all men take of them freely.[1]

III.—1. The third Supreme Gift of God to his Church, is his Written Word: concerning which it remains to treat briefly, considered in that light. It is in the third aspect of the Kingdom of God, namely, the aspect of it as held forth in its members, and therefore called his *Church;* that the revelation of the will of God concerning Salvation, and especially that revelation considered in its written and permanent form, is always exhibited as the Gift of God to his Kingdom. Considered under the first aspect of that Kingdom,—namely, as the Messianic Kingdom: Christ, the Head of the Kingdom, and the Mediator between God and man, and so the Saviour of the world—is the great Gift of God to it. And considered as the New Creation, which is its second aspect: the Divine Spirit, sent from the Father and the

[1] Rev., xxii. 17.

Son, whose work is the efficient cause of all salvation, is always exhibited as the Gift of God to his Kingdom. These gifts of God have a necessary and a perpetual relation to each other, and to the Kingdom of God. Though we can distinguish, in thought, between the Kingdom itself and the aspects of it thus presented; and cannot confound, in thought, the Kingdom with the gifts bestowed on it—much less can we confound these gifts with each other: yet, under the whole œconomy of salvation, the Kingdom is not manifested independently of all three of these supreme gifts of God to it: and throughout that œconomy they are all manifested unto Salvation, always in precisely the same relation to each other. With regard to the Written Word, it is very certain that none of it is older than the age of Moses; unless the Book of Job belongs to the period between the giving of circumcision and the giving of the Passover. If this exception be insisted on, even then, the written word began after the distinct organization of the visible Church began. And from Moses until the last inspired writer, the divine organization and the revelation in a permanent form, went on; till both were delivered up in their perfect and final condition, and the Gospel Church stood before men, invested with all divine gifts. Commensurate, too, with the rise of a permanent revelation to the Church, and a permanent organization of it: God laid, in the miraculous preservation of the first-born in Egypt, the foundation of priesthood and ministry for his gathered Church—and at Sinai restated on tables of stone, and uttered audibly to all Israel, as the foundation of all his written revelation, that moral law which he had written, at the Creation, in the nature of man. So that the divine Teacher and his Word of truth, and the divine Spirit which justifies him and makes it effectual, and the organic visibility of the divine Kindom, and the permanent institution of a ministry between God and man, with God's holy will and holy ordinances committed to them: stand in immediate and indissoluble relation to each other, in the origin as well as in the entire progress of the Kingdom of God, considered as visibly separated from the world and organized as the Church of Christ.

2. Whatever the Lord Jesus Christ has done, or will do for his Church, and by consequence the foundation of all that the Spirit has done, or will do, in her and by her: has no other infallible record and repository, accessible to man in his mortal condi-

tion, than the Holy Scriptures. The whole of them is declared to be given by inspiration of God : to be spoken by holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost : to be able to make men wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus ; to be profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ; to be the means whereby the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.[1] These Scriptures, therefore, holy in themselves, and in all they teach, divine in their origin and in their contents ; are a complete revelation from God, of the great end of our being, and of the way in which we may accomplish it. They are, as to the form of them, invested with divine certainty ; as to the matter of them, with divine authority. And thus they are the only infallible rule whereby men may know what duty God requires of them, and what they ought to believe concerning him. In their present form, they present to the Gospel Church the means of knowing the will of God, in some important respects, different from what existed under all previous dispensations—widely as their several conditions may have differed from each other. God's Kingdom existed in this world for many centuries, without possessing any written revelation of his will ; and it might have existed continually, in that condition—through the same divine means that actually sustained it so long—or through whatever other resources of the infinite wisdom, power, and grace of God. As soon as God began to separate his Kingdom—visibly and organically from the world which he rejected, he began, also, to bestow on it the permanent knowledge of his will, in a written form—as I have before shown. But under the Mosaic Dispensation, these written revelations of the will of God were given, little by little, through many centuries ; whereas we possess the complete and final record of his whole will concerning our salvation. To estimate with some degree of certainty, the practical effect of a difference which seems to be so great ; there are other elements of the problem, and they decisive, which are to be considered. The word of God, when unwritten, was adequate for the guidance of the ancient people of God in the way of life ; and the successive portions, as written, were adequate in the same way, to the Jewish Church. But after the Old Testament Scriptures were complete, and the Jewish Church and people had crucified the Lord of life,—

[1] 2 Pet., iii. 16; 2 Tim., iii. 15–17.

the whole became a sealed book unto them—even to this day. And now God's entire word, in its perfect form, does not avail, of itself, to keep the nominal professors of the religion of Jesus from fatal heresy and iniquity, much less to subdue his avowed enemies. We must add, therefore, on one side, the extraordinary presence of God, in his ancient Church, and the constant manifestation of miracles, prophecy, and immediate divine inspiration; and on the other, the mighty increase of the saving work of the Spirit, commensurate with the increase of the saving revelation of Christ, in the Gospel Church. So far from diminishing the pre-eminence of the Gospel Church state—these added considerations seem to increase it greatly; and to point out to us, in the sum of its relations to Christ, to the Spirit, and to the written Word—the ground of that undeniable supremacy over all preceding dispensations, which is so clearly asserted in the Gospel.[1]

3. With the Written Word complete; with Christ crucified, and then infinitely exalted; with the Spirit actually poured out according to the promise of the Father, actually dwelling in the Church, with all his saving influences; with her own organization complete, according to the will of God; and with the accumulated fruits and experience of eighteen centuries of labour, of warfare, of witness-bearing, of suffering, and of rejoicing, as the Bride of the Lamb: the Church of God presents herself to the actual generation of perishing sinners—with the one Great Message, repeated through all ages, and in all tongues,—Deny thyself—take up thy Cross—follow Jesus Christ in the regeneration! Her fundamental means of grace, is the Knowledge of this Written Word. Her highest duty, is to hold and teach the whole counsel of God, therein revealed. The great office of the ministry given to her by God, is to preach this blessed Gospel—which is the power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth. And the highest necessity, as well as the chief duty, of every one that hears the good tidings of great joy, glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men; is to arise from the dust, and hail the blessed day, and hasten to the light of Zion and to the brightness of her rising. For here is that truth, of which this Church of God is the pillar and ground. Here is that household of faith, of which Jesus Christ is the

[1] Gal., iii. and iv. *passim*; Heb., vii. *passim*.

chief Corner Stone ; of which all the Prophets and Apostles have been successive foundations; in which all true believers are fellow-citizens with the saints ; which the Holy Spirit builds together as a habitation for God ; and whose life is first given, and then perpetually nourished, through that incorruptible and imperishable truth.[1]

4. From the beginning of the world God's will was made known to man, in a supernatural manner, concerning all that relates to his spiritual advancement. It was so before the fall of man : still more emphatically so after the fall. Through all the centuries the revelation of divine truth continually increased ; and it is capable of being shown—as I think I have shown in a former Treatise—what was the aggregate state of divine Knowledge among men, at every great era of the past—and what was added by God from period to period. At length, all that had been revealed was reduced, by men chosen and inspired of God, into a written form, and delivered to his ancient Church as soon as it was completely organized : and thenceforward, during many centuries, as further revelations were made to it by men chosen and inspired by God, they were reduced to writing and delivered to the Church. And coincidently with the complete organization and establishment of the Church in the gospel form of it, and her complete possession of the whole revealed truth of God unto Salvation, inspiration from God ceased altogether ; and with it, the power of miracles, and the spirit of prophecy, by which God was accustomed to attest the extraordinary vocation of his divine messengers. And now for nearly eighteen centuries, this Gospel Church, visible, universal, of the Lord Jesus Christ, has possessed this inestimable gift of God in this complete form. Thus considered, the subject presents itself to us under two distinct aspects. In the *first* place, this complete revelation must be contemplated as a perfect system of divine truth—independently of any divine efficacy external to the written Word, as, for example, of the Holy Spirit ; and independently of the effects of that superadded efficacy, in us. In this aspect, it has whatever efficacy truth, of itself, has : and it has this in the highest degree—because this truth is complete —and has no error mixed with it ; and the failure of that inherent efficacy of truth, when this truth is brought to bear on

[1] 1 Tim., iii. 15 ; Eph., ii. 19–22.

man, is necessarily attributable to some quality in man himself—as, for example, the sinful blindness of his mind or hardness of his heart—and not to the untruth of truth itself. Uttered by God with infinite authority and certainty; addressed to the understanding of man with perfect simplicity, directness, and clearness, making known to him more distinctly all moral, spiritual, and eternal things which he knew before, and revealing to him the most glorious truths, before wholly unknown to him; appealing to his heart and conscience in a manner the most effective, by methods the most powerful, and with motives the most transcendent: whatever it is possible for truth, of itself, to effect, responsive to itself in the mind, and soul, and nature, and life of man; this heaven-descended truth—issuing from the bosom of Jehovah, embodied in the person of God manifest in the flesh, inspired by God the Holy Ghost; must be competent to effect, far out of comparison with the combined effects of all other truths of which man can have any knowledge. Independently of any superadded efficacy, this is the natural efficacy, so to speak, of this gift of God to his Church; and upon the ground thereof, the obligation to make its contents known to every being capable of being influenced by truth, is complete: and the rejection of it by any such being, is a demonstration of his own depravity. But in the *second* place, this efficacy of divine truth, transcendent as it is when compared with all analogous means of influencing man; is as nothing compared to the efficacy of that same divine truth, when it is used by the divine Spirit as the divine instrument of our salvation. Just as the Spirit executes his work of grace, with reference to the Lord Jesus Christ as the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace: so, also, he executes that work with reference to divine truth in its practical application to our souls,—of which truth Christ, in all his offices, is the central object. And just so far as the sacred Scriptures contain the revelation of the will of God unto salvation; in the same degree the divine truth they contain, is that truth which the Spirit uses as his instrument, and with reference to which he performs his work, in man's salvation. But as these Scriptures are by inspiration of the Spirit himself, and contain his own record of the way of saving sinners: it is merely impossible that sinners saved through him, can be saved by, or into, any other form of truth; impossible if he works by truth

at all, that he should fail to work by this very truth ; impossible that this truth, thus used by him, should fail to effect the very object for which he—very God—both revealed it, made it permanent, and now uses it. This is the aspect of this gift of God to his Church, considered with reference to the work of the Holy Ghost, in our salvation ; and so considered, it is absolutely certain that the Gospel of Christ, is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth ; and is the great means bestowed on the Church by God for the promotion of his glory, and her own blessedness.

5. Considered in itself, and considered as the heritage of the Church by the gift of God, this Written Word is capable of an appreciation perfectly distinct, and as immense as we are competent to make. (*a*) It is unto the Church her divine warrant, for all that it is her duty to attempt on earth ; and is, in addition, a divine guaranty of support, of comfort, and of final triumph, in all her faithful endeavours to accomplish the will of God. (*b*) It is an infallible guide to her faith, also, wherein her own blessedness is assured, in proportion to her holiness ; and wherein salvation is secured to every one, upon the single condition of accepting her Lord, as their Lord. (*c*) Widening from these elemental points, it is the divine record of the entire life of the Church, from the beginning to the end of time ; the record, also, of the career of the human race, from its creation to the consummation of all things ; the record, also, of the bearing of all earthly things upon the Church and upon the human race, and of each of these upon the other. So that, standing in the midst of the centuries as they roll over her, she has the means of comprehending clearly, both herself and all things that touch, or in any wise affect her. However dark the place may be, she has a divine light which shines into it. (*d*) Still widening, it carries her back into immensity and eternity, setting before her the system of the Universe, of which all earthly things are so small a part,—making known to her the position which the race of man occupies in that boundless system—revealing the influence of his fall and recovery upon it—the relation of the method of his recovery to it—and the relation of all these stupendous realities to the being, the counsel, the providence, the grace and the glory of God, as manifested throughout his immeasurable works and dominion. So that, face to face with the

unseen world, she may comprehend her own mission, and posture with relation to the whole Universe. (*e*) Still widening, it opens before her the eternity to come—the life beyond death with its wondrous laws—her own consummation in boundless glory—the ruin of all the enemies of God with an endless ruin—the consummation of all power, and wisdom, and justice, and goodness and truth, and love over all worlds, to all eternity. And amidst all these fearfully immense issues of so much force so long applied, her own sublime and endless exaltation—her own transcendent relations to God and to the Universe, when God will be all and in all, and the Universe retrieved from sin, will be full of the blessedness, which her own Lord and Saviour, Head over all, will have bestowed on it, through her his elect Bride ! So that all along her pilgrimage there is no moment of darkness so profound, but that if she could endure it, she might have the vision of God ; no moment of weakness so abject, but that if she could lift up her head, she might behold upon the heights of heaven, the banner that was dipped in blood !

6. We seem prone to form the most erroneous opinions, concerning the true nature of the Church of God. On one side, men attribute to her an authority essentially divine ; and claim for her ordinances and office-bearers, powers which reside only in God. On the other side, they strip her of all authority, reduce her to the condition of a merely human association, and look to her own articles and acts as the only source of her power. Widely different from both, God represents his Church to be a real spiritual Kingdom, strictly subordinated to himself, yet charged with a sublime mission, and invested with authority to execute a work unspeakably glorious. Giving to her his only begotten Son, his Divine Spirit, and his Inspired Word, it is not possible to conceive that he could hold men guiltless, who resist his purposes of infinite grace and mercy through her. How then, should those who profess to be his people, pervert her nature, contemn her authority, or corrupt her life ; without forfeiting many of the most costly blessings provided for them, and putting at hazard the whole work to which they suppose they are called ? Where the divine Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit, and the Sacred Scriptures abide--even if it be with the humblest children of God ; there God abides also. But when these unspeakable gifts are bestowed by God as marks of his divine favour, to his Kingdom made

visible on earth—and as the efficacious means, besides, wherein that Kingdom grounds its very existence, and whereby it is able to execute the eternal purpose of God's will ; we insult the majesty of God, and we obstruct, according to our ability, the progress of his grace, by whatever departure, on the one side or the other, from the simple and complete reception, as they come from heaven, of ordinances which have the most convincing proof that they are of God.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DIVINE ORDINANCES: THE SABBATH—THE SACRAMENTS—INSTITUTED WORSHIP—DISCIPLINE—EVANGELIZATION.

I. Statement of the General Demonstration.—II. 1. The Sabbath a perpetual element in the Moral System of the Universe.—2. Its indissoluble connection with the whole Creative, Providential, and Gracious Work of God.—3. Its unspeakable importance to Man.—III. 1. The true idea of the Sacraments.—2. Nature and Use of these Divine Mysteries.—3. Descriptive explanation of them.—4. The Ends they serve and promote.—5. Their Efficacy depends on the Work of the Spirit in him who receives them, and is Wrought through our Faith in Christ.—6. The Number of them, and its constancy: their Relation to the Church under Successive Dispensations: Christ's relation to them, and their Record of him.—IV. 1. The Instituted Worship of God: Atheism repugnant to our natural convictions: The Spiritual Worship of the true God repugnant to our depraved nature.—2. The Revealed Will of God concerning the Worship he requires: its Object, Nature, Means, Rule, Obligation and End.—3. Particulars of Revealed Worship. First class: Sanctification of the Sabbath—Stated Assembling of Congregations—Almsgiving.—4. Second class: Particulars of stated Public Worship ordained by God for each congregation.—5. Third class: Administration of the Sacraments, Infliction of Church Censures, Public Fasting and Thanksgiving.—V. 1. The Ordinance of Discipline: Its Nature, and Efficacy.—2. Manner and Objects of its Administration.—3. The Censures of the Church are wholly spiritual: those inflicted upon offending members.—4. Administration of the Censures of the Church against all the Enemies of God.—VI. 1. The Evangelization of the world, an Ordinance of God: its Obligation on the Church.—2. Brief Appreciation of that great Endeavour.

I. The execution of God's eternal Covenant of Grace, produces the Kingdom of God in its threefold aspect of the Messianic Kingdom under Christ its head, the New Creation by the Holy Ghost, and the Church of the Living God held forth in the covenant people of God. In this last aspect the Kingdom of God becomes visible and organized by the divine use of the two ideas of the Headship of Christ and the communion of saints: and the whole of that organization, and the whole action of the Church by means of every part thereof, are products of divine ordinances revealed by God, and every one of them a Gift of God to his Church. These divine ordinances therefore, em-

brace everything which gives visibility, organization, and efficacy to the Kingdom of God as now manifested in this world, considered as the Church of Christ. Of the three supreme Gifts of God to this Church, which I have considered in the preceding chapter, only the third one—his written word—can be considered as strictly an ordinance; and that, perhaps, only in its form as written and therefore permanent. Nevertheless, there is a profound sense in which not only the written word, but, also, both the Saviour and the Spirit are, as I have endeavoured to explain, peculiar Gifts of God to his Church visible and organized, peculiarly related to all these ordinances bestowed on her in those respects. The chief of those ordinances by means of which those three supreme Gifts of God are made effectual, I am now to consider as briefly as I can. First generally; afterwards those called sacraments, more particularly; then the office-bearers who administer them, and the Government which these office-bearers compose and administer by the ordination of God. In this manner the analogy will be complete between the second and third books of this Treatise, on one side, wherein the Subjective Knowledge of God, first in the actual work in the individual soul and then in the effects of that work, is disclosed; and the fourth and fifth books on the other side, wherein first the actual constitution of the visible Church, and then the outward divine movement of it, are attempted to be demonstrated. And thus the whole Treatise to the end of this book, ought to present to us one large and connected demonstration of the mode in which God saves his elect, the personal work in their souls, their individual lives resulting therefrom, their organization into a visible Church, the true nature, end, and work of that Church, the supreme Gifts of God to it, its divine ordinances, its divinely-ordained office-bearers, and divinely-appointed Government and the movement thereof.

II.—1. The consecration of man to the service and enjoyment of God, and therewith his investiture by God with dominion over, and property in, the earth and all things therein, and the divine command to possess and to replenish it with his seed; was coincident with the creation of the first parents of our race.[1] The other great act of God's providence preceding the Covenant of Works, was that he blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.[2]

[1] Gen., i. 27–30. [2] Gen., ii. 1–3.

Throughout the Scriptures no two ideas are more perpetually held forth, than these two of the primeval consecration of man and of the Sabbath; and amidst the great variety of aspects in which the latter is presented to us, we are never left in doubt that it is a fundamental element in the moral system of the universe to which man appertains. Its primary conception is that of a hallowed rest, whose use shall be the special worship of God, the cultivation of the divine life in our own souls, and the doing of good to our fellow-men. It is, therefore, a divine ordinance containing in itself, in some sort, a summary of all human obligation; our duty, namely, to God, to ourselves, and to each other. In this manner we see it connected with the whole work of God, as manifested in creation, in providence, and in grace. In this manner it is connected with the origin, course, and destiny of our race under both Covenants, under every dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, with reference to our entire being in this life, and to all the issues of it in the life to come.

2. I have already pointed out the fact of its institution in immediate connection with the work of creation, and as one of the two great acts of God's providence towards man in his estate of original perfection. And the reason of that connection, and of the connection of those two acts of God towards man with each other, is clearly and repeatedly given by him. The act commemorated, alike, God's work of creation, and God's ceasing from further creative work, in ineffable repose, when that work was done, and he saw that everything he had made was very good: and it ordained that man, the created and the blessed head of this whole work, should thus commemorate, forever, his own origin and blessedness, and the being, and glory, and work, and rest of God, in whose image he was created.[1] And this was its special use, under both covenants—with such additions as increasing revelations of the grace of God made thereto—until the work of humiliation by Christ was complete, and he had risen from the dead. Its connection with the moral nature of man, and the moral Law written in that nature by God at the creation of man, is no less immediate. When God, at Sinai, restored upon two tables of stone, the sum of that unalterable rule of all duty required of man, and laid it at the foundation of his written

[1] Gen., ii. 1–3; Exod., xx. 8–11.

word ; one of the four commandments of the first table, the sum of which as interpreted by Christ, is the duty of supreme love to God, was the distinct reiteration of this ordinance of the Sabbath day, as possessing the very highest moral obligation.[1] Nor was its connection less close with the civil polity, ordained by God for his ancient people. The feast of the Passover which commemorated both the bondage and the deliverance of the Jewish people, the feast of Pentecost which commemorated the giving of the Law at Sinai, and the feast of Tabernacles which commemorated their pilgrimage from Egypt to Canaan—the greatest events in their history, were all as really sabbatical as they were national ; and both their years of Jubilee, the seventh and fiftieth—the most remarkable features of their political institutions, were purely sabbatical years. Indeed the idea of hallowed time—time consecrated to God and a Sabbath for man, pervaded, thoroughly, every civil institution of that remarkable commonwealth. The ceremonial system added to the moral and political systems, completed the outward organization of the Jewish Dispensation ; and the idea of the divine and perpetual obligation of the Sabbath day was as completely fixed in the whole Levitical and sacrificial system, and in the Dispensation considered as a whole, as I have just shown it to have been in its moral and civil elements. In the wilderness no manna fell on the Sabbath day. Nothing might be brought in through the gates of Jerusalem on that day. And so completely was the right observance of the day a conspicuous token between God and his ancient people,[2] that this has been continually made a pretext for rejecting the Sabbath, as a purely Jewish institution. In like manner, the New Testament Scriptures and the Christian Dispensation, have not only accepted and perpetuated, in a manner the most complete, this vital conception and ordinance ; but they have articulately enlarged its significance by investing the Sabbath with the idea of Redemption as well as the idea of Creation—the idea of the divine Saviour as well as the idea of the omnipotent God. Christ proclaimed himself to be the Lord of the Sabbath day ;[3] his inspired Apostles called the day on which he rose from the dead—and repeatedly appeared to them—the Lord's day ;[4] and, divinely authorized, they distinguished that

[1] Exod., xx. 8–11; Mat., xxii. 37, 38.
[2] Isa., lviii. 13, 14; Ezekiel, xx. 12–20.
[3] Mat., xii. 8.
[4] Rev., i. 10; John, xx. 19. 26.

day as the perpetual Sabbath of the Christian Church: which that Church has observed through all ages, with a fidelity exactly proportioned to the measure of its grace.—And finally, this enduring and august summary of the sublime spiritual system of which God, and man, and creation, and providence, and redemption are the everlasting elements—is projected into eternity; and the assurance of a rest—a sabbatism—on the other side of the Jordan of death—even that heaven into which Jesus the Son of God, our great high priest has passed, is revealed to our faith as one of its very firmest supports.[1]

3. To us, then, this Sabbath day is a sign between God and our own souls, alike of our original perfection as his creatures, and of our crowning and endless blessedness as his redeemed children. It is besides a joy and a support to us, all along our weary pilgrimage, fighting as we go the good fight of faith. Truly has our Lord said, The Sabbath was made for man;[2] and, therefore, how could it be, that the Son of man should not be Lord of the Sabbath? Take from the Christian Church this very first gift of God to man, and who can conceive by what other means she can either gather or perfect God's saints? Take from a world full of sin, and toil, and ignorance, and misery, this hallowed rest, and then imagine by what possibility the human race can be extricated from perpetual degradation in this life, and endless ruin in that which is to come? Silence, in the hearts of all God's saints, those words of solemn admonition and of sweetest consolation, Remember the Sabbath day; and who could endure a life of temptation, and trial, and warfare, and sorrow—robbed of all hallowed rest on earth—robbed of all type, and sign, and seal of eternal rest to come? And who should restore to God the glory and the praise of all penitent and believing souls—the glory and the praise of all created and redeemed souls—when the day of the Lord should return no more, and the voice of the bride be heard no more? Many things are done and many are left undone, both by the Church and the world, which, while we see the omission or the act to be wrong, we see also some way to explain the motive for that which we condemn. But that the Church or the world could ever apprehend the ordination of the Sabbath day—as anything else than a transcendent blessing to our ruined world—a transcendent

[1] Heb., iv. *passim.*

[2] Mark, ii. 27, 28.

proof of the goodness and wisdom of God—seems to be incapable of any explanation, that is not grounded in the total obduracy of our depraved nature.

III.—1. The covenant in eternity between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is the complete and is the most remote expression of all God's grace toward fallen man ; and each penitent sinner, a party in interest from the beginning through Christ his covenant head, becomes a party in fact from the moment of his union with Christ, in his effectual calling. Following the analogy of this infinitely vast conception and example, God has been pleased from time to time, when he revealed to man some signal mercy which he had in store, to reduce the statement of it into the form of a covenant, and to add a sign and seal of the covenant in the form of a sacrament.—The Covenant of Works was the first example : and the special divine covenants under all dispensations of the covenant of grace, are additional examples more or less complete—all of which and their sacraments, whether extraordinary or permanent, are manifestations of that eternal covenant. Until the time of Abraham, these merciful dealings of God with man, were of a kind that did not create any visible and permanent separation of his people from the world, nor lead to the outward organization of his Church. But to the covenant which God made with him, which contained so many stipulations and such numerous and glorious promises, he added the sacrament of circumcision—a token of the covenant—and by it signified every stipulation and sealed every promise of it.[1] The ideas involved in this remarkable transaction are very clear in themselves, and are reiterated, explained and enforced throughout the Scriptures. As it will be necessary for me to treat the two sacraments of the Christian Church separately, I shall in this place speak only of that which is common to all, as the second great ordinance of God.

2. God's Covenant, whereby grace is given to men, is exhibited in permanent rites, appointed by himself.[2] These rites are tokens, signs, and seals between God and his people, considered both individually and collectively, of his covenant together with every promise made and every truth held forth in it, and also of every duty enjoined and every right conferred by it.

[1] Gen., xvii. 9–16; Rom., iv. *passim.*

[2] Gen., xvii. 9–14; Ex., xii. 1–20; 1 Cor., xi. 23–34; Matt., xxviii. 19; John, iii. 22.

Above all, these rites hold forth Christ, the Mediator of that eternal covenant of Grace to which every sacrament of the Church of God appertains ; and they hold forth those blessings which he confers on all believers—most especially those benefits which are connected with the righteousness of faith ; the whole of which are thus signified and sealed, according to the measure of the true knowledge of God under each dispensation—and most conspicuously of all under the sacraments of the Gospel Church.[1] We call these *sacraments*, after the Latin Fathers, who translated the Greek word *μυστήριον* which is of such frequent occurrence in the New Testament, not by the more obvious Latin word *arcanum* which the Romans had consecrated to their idolatrous mysteries, but by the word *sacramentum* whose previous use was chiefly juridical and military. The true sense of the original term is *a divine secret ;* and the proper signification of our term *sacrament* is the entire thing to which God gave the original name ; not merely the outward elements and rites, not simply the sign and the seal, but also the sublime spiritual realities which all these hold forth to our faith.

3. Sacramental signs and ceremonies, of whatever kind, are to be clearly distinguished from moral obligations, which are binding upon all men : for the former are obligatory upon believers only, and are accessible only to them. They are instituted and revealed by God ; are wholly destitute of natural existence, and of human authority ; and so both their obligation and their efficacy are divine. In order to any efficacy, there must be some external, visible, substantial sign, distinguishing them from mere oral instruction—and which in its application to us, becomes sensible and real. There must be a correspondence, indeed a union, between the sign and the thing signified ; not indeed natural, much less physical—but moral and spiritual, and at the same time constant and authoritative. There must be the things signified—the benefits held forth, taught, confirmed unto those to whom the outward signs are applied ; and those also properly qualified to receive those signs, and to partake of the blessings they signify—to seal which unto worthy recipients is the chief end of every Sacrament. And that great end must be clearly set forth and understood, in the proper use of every sacrament, as being accomplished in us, not by the inherent efficacy

[1] Gal., iii. 27 ; 1 Cor., x. 16 ; John, vi. 27–65.

of the sacrament—nor by the power or intention of him who administers it—nor by the will of him who receives it—but by the power of God who instituted it, and who exhibits and applies his grace by means of it.

4. There are, therefore, obvious and various ends and uses, all of them of the highest importance, to which sacraments are relevant, and to which God has caused them to be applied. Primarily, both of the sacraments of the Church after Abraham, and both of those of the Gospel Dispensation, served as visible marks of separation between those in covenant with God, and the world out of which he had called them to be his people. As sacred rites, God's people by their first use make open profession of giving themselves away to him ; and by their after use renew their public profession of being his—with personal and solemn engagements to his service, through Christ, by the Gospel. As divine ordinances, God's people by their use make profession of that true faith by which alone sinners can be saved ; holding forth in this manner the sum of the great truths and promises of God, and their acceptance of them all, and of Christ the sum of all—as a testimony to the world that lieth in sin. They serve, by their use, to realize the communion of all saints with each other, and with their common Lord, through the Holy Ghost, by the word of God ; and thus to promote amongst all saints, a more perfect fellowship, in the Church which is the Body of Christ, a more complete spiritual unity, a deeper sense of the supreme headship of Christ, and a fuller participation of the Holy Ghost. They serve as sensible, perpetual, and sacred manifestations, on the part of God, to the faith of his people, of the reality of his promises and the exactness of his fidelity in their performance ; according to his eternal covenant, in Jesus Christ, by his Spirit and his Word. They serve as perpetual means whereby the obedience and love of God's penitent and believing children, are both manifested and strengthened ; wherein, by the use of God's appointed signs and seals of his Covenant—all his promises, and Jesus Christ the sum of them all, are so made over to them, that the merits of Christ and the work of the Spirit, and the consolations of the Gospel, are more and more effectual in their souls—to their great growth in grace, and increase in all spiritual gifts. And finally, they serve, by their true and lawful use, as a perpetual exhibition of the ex-

istence, the life, and all the infallible marks of the Church of the Living God, to which they appertain by his gift ; manifesting the power of God's word and ordinances, and the efficacy of that ministry bestowed on it by Christ, and in whose hands is the administration of the sacraments of the Christian Church.

5. The nature of all sacraments is such that their mere use cannot insure salvation—nor their mere absence defeat it. Being only of positive obligation, and not in their nature moral, they are in their nature variable, and in their use efficacious only in the way and to the extent revealed by God, and only by reason of his blessing on their use. So far from involving salvation, therefore, their efficacy is indissolubly connected with faith in Christ, and they cannot of themselves confer any grace. On the other hand, being ordained of God, and their lawful use enforced by divine commands and promises ; their neglect, perversion, and corruption are not only heinous sins, but, according to the grossness of the abuse of them, are infallible proofs of unbelief, of backsliding, of depravity, of apostacy. Considered as outward and visible signs, of inward and invisible grace ; they would be pertinent to any grace, and might be held forth in any sign, that God would appoint. In effect these principles and truths have had a wide application, as every student of the Scriptures is aware; and perhaps the tendency of those who have expounded those sacred oracles, has been rather to enlarge than to limit the application of the great principle on which the idea of all sacraments rests, namely, the confirmation of God's promises to man, by outward signs and seals. It is certain—as I have already said, that true sacraments can have no efficacy except through the work of the divine Spirit in us ; and that it is through our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that the efficacy imparted to them by the Spirit produces its effects in us. And since the word of God is the infallible rule of our faith, and Christ crucified is the specific object of it ; whatever can be accepted as a true sacrament of the gospel Church, must have the precise warrant, in that word, of that Saviour ; and must hold forth that Saviour in his person, his work, his promises, and all his benefits.

6. The number of ordinary and perpetual sacraments of the Covenant of Grace, is but two. The truths and principles upon which they rest are permanent—and the essential characteristics of those divine rites which signify and seal to us the blessings

and benefits which the Redeemer confers on penitent sinners, must also be constant. We need, and he secures for us, on the one hand pardon and acceptance with God, and on the other restoration to his lost image. This is the sum of whatever form of revealed salvation for fallen man through the Mediator; the sum of what is held forth in the sacraments of the Covenant of Grace—however their form may have been divinely varied. That change of form has occurred but once—and will occur no more: for the state of the revealed Knowledge of God, so increased from Abraham to Christ as to require the change of their form under the Gospel Church, is constant under it till the second coming of the Son of Man. I have shown in another place, how the institution and use of these sacraments necessarily involved the visibility and organization of the Church of God, and the visible and sacramental rejection of the world by him; how, therefore, their institution was so long delayed; and how, coincidently with their institution, and again with the change in their form, all things relating to the Kingdom of God considered as held forth in his children organized into a visible and separate Church, received successively their shape and direction. The Church is before the Sacraments, before every ordinance of God bestowed on it; even the Sabbath day, was ordained and hallowed after God had created man, and consecrated him to his service. But the Sacraments are before the Church considered as visible, organized, and separate from the world; and are, together with all the other ordinances bestowed on her by God, the outward means of producing her organization, of perpetuating her existence, and of achieving her triumph. The Sacrament of Circumcision was immediately connected with the Abrahamic Covenant, which is, in a manner, the great charter of the Church of God, and of the human race. The Sacrament of the Passover, formed the point of separation between the Abrahamic and Mosaic dispensations—appertaining to both; and the Jewish institutions, possessing no sacrament peculiar to themselves, accepted these two, and by means of them perpetuated the sacramental unity of the visible Church, during the long interval between the dispensation of Abraham and that of Christ. Christ came, not to destroy but to fulfil. A priest forever after the order of Melchizedek—an order above and before Abraham himself—the end of all the priesthood, all the sacrifices, all the righteousness of the law of Moses;

he accepted these primeval sacraments, used them, ratified them, changed their form, fulfilled them into a perfect accordance with the perfect form of the Knowledge of God. He came by water and blood—the Spirit being his witness. In heaven the Father and the Word bear record ; in earth, the water and the blood bear record ; the Spirit in this great spiritual dispensation, bears record both in heaven and in earth ; in heaven, as one with the Father and the Word ; in earth as agreeing in one with the water and the blood ; and this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.[1] In the Sacrament of Baptism by water, and in the sacramental use of the symbols of the Body and Blood of Christ, therefore, there is a threefold record in earth—agreeing with a threefold record in heaven—to the Son of God as the Saviour of the world.

IV.—1. The Church of God to which he has given the Sabbath and the Sacraments, has by his ordination an instituted Worship. In a previous chapter I have discussed the question of worship acceptable to God, considered as one of the infallible marks of the true Church ; and have treated the whole idea of it, in connection with a pure faith on one side, and a holy life on the other, as obedience rendered with a willing, subject, and trustful heart, to the Triune God, by his people, according to his law. That worship may be considered as personal, domestic and social, or public : it is public worship, as connected with the true Church, and as a divine ordinance, which I am now to consider very briefly. I understand the Scriptures to assert that the existence of God is manifested by God himself, in the conviction of every soul created by him ; and that, on this account, invisible things concerning him—amongst the rest his eternal power and Godhead—are clearly manifested to men, by the things he has created ; and thus every man is left without excuse. Thus knowing God, men neither glorify him nor rejoice in him ; but reject him and corrupt themselves, until at length they transfer the glory due to the incorruptible God, to images of corruptible man, and birds and beasts, and creeping things. Then God gives them over to all degrading sins, to change his truth into a lie, to a mind utterly reprobate, and to the fellowship of all whom he judges worthy of death.[2] On the other hand, the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation

[1] 1 John, v. 6–9.

[2] Rom., i. 18–32.

to every one that believeth ; for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith ; as it is written, The just shall live by faith.[1] In effect, atheism is incompatible with the nature and convictions of any created being, who has reason and conscience ; and on the other hand, the recognition and worship of the true God, are incompatible with the nature and desires of any created being having reason and conscience—who is depraved and left without the grace of God. Religion and worship, man must have. Left to himself in his fallen state, they will certainly be false—probably brutal. If pure and true, they must be revealed by God, and perpetuated through his grace.

2. All religious worship should be rendered to the true God ;[2] the triune God is the only true God ;[3] no religious worship should be rendered to any other being.[4] I have proved at large in previous chapters, that the word of God is the only infallible rule of faith, obedience, life—and in the most special sense, of all religious worship ; with reference to which, the law of God is the rule prescribed by him to us, of all that we ought to do and to avoid, under the penalty of death to the disobedient, and the promise of life to the obedient.[5] The special manner in which God requires man to approach him, is in the way of spiritual worship ; and in the first table of the Law he has revealed, in the form of a covenant binding and unalterable forever, the sum of all duty due directly to himself ; and this sum our Lord has explained to be supreme love to God.[6] All worship rendered to God by fallen man, must be rendered through the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace ; who is Jesus Christ the Son of God and the Saviour of the world.[7] It must be rendered also by the help of the Holy Ghost ;[8] and according to the will of God.[9] And seeing that God is a spirit, they who worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth :[10] and all who do thus worship him, are his covenant people—and being kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, will inherit eternal life.[11] This summary, brief as it is, of the revealed will of God concerning the worship due to him ; discloses with perfect clearness,

[1] Rom., i. 16, 17.
[2] Deut., vi. 13 ; x. 20.
[3] 1 Jno., v. 7 ; 2 Cor., xiii. 14 ; Mat., xxviii. 19.
[4] Matt., iv. 10 ; Ex., xx. 3.
[5] Matt., xix. 17 ; Rom., i. 18–32.
[6] Ex., xx. 1–11 ; Mat., xxii. 37, 38.
[7] 1 Tim., ii. 5 ; John, xiv. 6.
[8] Rom., viii. 26 ; Eph., ii. 18.
[9] 1 John, v. 14.
[10] John, iv. 24.
[11] Phil., iii. 3 ; 1 Pet., i. 5.

its object, its nature, its means, its rule, its obligation, and its end; and at the same time discloses the most fundamental truths concerning God, concerning ourselves, and concerning those great relations between him and ourselves which we express by the word religion. When we come to apply the revealed truths which I have stated, to the practical life of God's visible Church, so as to determine with certainty the particulars of that divine worship which he has instituted for her; we find the whole matter revealed with the clearness and the completeness which distinguish God's word. I shall not in this place for lack of room, attempt to disclose the particulars of God's instituted public worship, which were peculiar to any preceding dispensations; but confine myself to those which appertain to the Gospel Church. And in summing up the chief of these from the sacred Scriptures, I will endeavour to classify them in such a way as to avoid all confusion; the object being, not to comment on them, but to show what they are, and that they are of divine authority.

3. There is a class of these particulars of which it may be said, they are stated in their recurrence, general in their application, and universal in their obligation. The chief of these are the sanctification of the Sabbath day; public worship by the congregations of God's people, especially on that day; and the giving of alms for the poor, and for other pious purposes, as an act of religious worship. The sanctification of the Sabbath, as a duty we owe to God, is expressly revealed as a part of the moral law; its indissoluble connection with all recognition of the true God by man, and all recognition by God of any people as his, is manifested throughout the Scriptures; and its relation to the Lord Jesus is so close, that on it he rose from the dead, on it continually appeared to his disciples, on it finally ascended up into heaven, and in commemoration of him his inspired Apostles changed the day of the Jewish Sabbath, and called the Christian Sabbath, the Lord's day.[1] The stated assembling of the gathered congregations of God's people on the Christian Sabbath, for his solemn worship, was obligatory and habitual from the foundation of the Gospel Church; and the weekly contribution of the saints to pious purposes, was as distinctly commanded, as any other divine ordinance of its class.[2] Nor was either of the

[1] Ex., xx. 8–11; Matt., v. 17, 18; Rev., i. 10; Heb., iv. 3–11.

[2] Heb., x. 25; Acts, ii. 42; xx. 7; 1 Cor., xvi. 1–4; Gal., ii. 9, 10.

particulars just stated, new to the Gospel Church. For under every preceding dispensation the sanctity of the Sabbath had been a fundamental part of revealed religion ; the synagogue worship goes back, possibly, to the captivity in Egypt—certainly to the captivity in Babylon ; and the service of God by means of our worldly substance, religiously appropriated according to his will, is as ancient as religion itself, and thoroughly pervaded the institutions of Moses. The Church of God ought never to forget, that special blessings and duties rightly performed, go together.

4. There is another class of these particulars of which it may be said, as of the preceding, that they are stated in their recurrence, and universal in their obligation, but, unlike the others, they are special—not general—in their application. They appertain to each congregation, severally, with all the force of a divine appointment, and embrace its stated duties and privileges, as an assembly habitually meeting for the worship of God. I had occasion in a previous chapter, when treating of purity of worship as an infallible mark of the true Church ; to state all the divine ordinances for public worship in each Christian congregation, and to adduce Scripture proof of what I taught.—I, therefore, limit myself here to a brief recapitulation. It is the ordinance of God, plainly declared in his word, that in the stated public worship of each Christian congregation, the sacred Scriptures shall be read in the hearing of the people, prayer shall be offered to God through Jesus Christ, God's praises shall be sung by the congregation, the gospel of the grace of God shall be preached to the people, and the blessing of God shall be invoked upon them. It is thus that God has provided, in the stated worship of every congregation, for the manifestation of his own glory, for the comfort and edification of his saints, for the conversion of sinners unto himself, for restraining and rebuking the iniquity of the impenitent, and for the perpetuation and increase of the Church itself.

5. The last class of these particulars, though all of them are ordained of God, and all as ordinances of God have relation, more or less intimate and direct, to his Church ; that relation varies too much amongst the several particulars, to admit of any general definition of it, that would embrace all and be at once brief and exact. The administration of the sacraments,

in each particular congregation, to all such as are entitled to receive them, is of stated, but at the same time of occasional and special obligation.[1] The infliction of Church censures considered as the public execution of sentence; and in like manner the public restoration of such as have been separated from the Church by due process of Discipline; are both parts of the instituted worship of God, of only special obligation.[2] Public and solemn fasting and humiliation—as well as public and solemn thanksgiving, are divine ordinances of a peculiar kind; for while it is competent to the civil power, as appointed of God, to appoint both with reference to the commonwealth; it is the duty of the whole Church upon occasions relevant to the whole, and of each particular congregation upon occasions relevant to it, to observe these ordinances of worship, whose obligation is only special—and may arise very often, or very seldom.[3] It cannot be said that the rite of marriage appertains in any way to the instituted worship of God—nor that the burial of the dead is a spiritual ordinance obligatory upon the Church: nevertheless, marriage is treated in the Scriptures as being far more than a merely civil contract; and the relation of temporal death to sin, together with the certainty of the resurrection of the body, impart to the burial of our dead the deepest solemnity. It is in accordance with the revealed will of God, that both particulars should be attended with special religious solemnities.—The office bearers and government of the Church, both of which are ordinances of God, have the most intimate connection with the matters I have been discussing. But as it will be necessary to treat those topics more fully, they are passed over here. The especial fitness of the former for their respective places in every congregation, and their diligent discharge of the duties appertaining to their several stations; are, next to the blessing of God, the decisive element in the practical effect of every particular in the instituted worship of the Church of God.

V.—1. Though the public infliction and the public removal of Church censures, are particulars of the worship appointed of God; it appertains to the government ordained of God for his Church, to determine the particular cases in which censures shall

[1] Matt., xxvi. 26–29; xxviii. 19; Acts, ii. 41, 42; 1 Cor., xi. 23–29.

[2] Matt., xviii. 15–18; 1 Cor., v. 1–5; 2 Cor., ii. 6–8.

[3] Luke, v. 35; Psalm l. 14; Phil., iv. 6.

be inflicted or removed, according to the divine law and the merits of each case ; and the practical administration of that law of God, both as a function of government, and as a part of worship, is what is specially meant by the Discipline of the Church, which is one of the great ordinances bestowed upon her by God. The commonwealth is, both in thought and in fact, before and above any particular form which is given to what we call government ; and that again is before and above any particular institutions which are created for the community, in connection with the co-existing form of government. But in whatever state of advancement any commonwealth may be, and whatever may be the form of its government, and whatever may be its peculiar institutions, whether civil, political, or social ; it is certain that the just, wise, and faithful administration of its government and institutions, is indispensable in the accomplishment of whatever they are designed or competent to effect. In the Christian Church considered as a free commonwealth, which it is, there is this great peculiarity, that the community itself exists after a spiritual manner, and for spiritual ends—and that the visible form which it acquires is prescribed by God in the sacred Scriptures, together with all government and all institutions relevant thereto. The just, wise, and faithful administration of the government, institutions, and whole interests of such a community, is, upon the conditions stated, perfectly vital : and when, in addition, God gives to this universal administration the dignity of a divine ordinance, and bestows it upon the Church as at once a special command and a special blessing ; the Discipline of the Church becomes a matter not merely necessary to her peace, her edification, and her purity—but indispensable to her continued existence as the visible Kingdom of God. According as the laws and ordinances of God are administered, more or less truly and exactly, in the Kingdom of God, by the government he has established in that Kingdom ; the Kingdom itself is more or less prosperous, more or less glorious. But when they cease to be administered as laws and institutions of God, and the government itself is depraved, and discipline is at an end : however God's individual children may be still faithful to him—the visible organization is corrupt—and must repent and reform, or become totally apostate. There is no instance in the history of Christianity, of the restoration of a Church which has completely forsaken God.

2. I shall consider the government of the Church in another place: concerning its particular nature nothing more being necessary here, than is commonly allowed by all Christian people. No one will deny that the people of God considered as his Church, are entitled to have that form of government and those ordinances, which God judges to be best for them; and few will hesitate to admit that the obligation resting on them as a Church, as office bearers therein, and as members thereof, is not only complete, but divine, to use their highest endeavours to obtain and to perpetuate that government and those ordinances. What is insisted on here, is the divine and universal obligation resting on the whole Church, and on all office bearers of it who are invested with any sort of authority or power, and on all tribunals of it, and on every separate portion of it, and on every private member of it—each in his place, and according to his degree, and his opportunity; to contribute all he can towards the wise, just, and faithful administration of the actual government and ordinances, to the glory of God and the good of men. This high duty is specially and officially binding on those who bear rule in the Church. The government which the Lord Jesus has appointed in his Church, distinct from the civil power, is charged with the momentous duties of admitting penitent and believing sinners into it,—of watching over and guiding the Church, and every one who is a member of it,—and of administering those Censures which God has ordained in his word, and which bear to its threats, a relation somewhat analogous to that which the sacraments bear to its promises.[1] For the objects of it are, the reclaiming of offenders against the Law of the Lord,—the deterring of believers from the commission of offences,—the purging out of evil leaven from the Church,—the vindicating of the profession of the Gospel, the maintaining of the honour of Christ, and the preventing of the wrath of God from falling on the Church.[2] The administration of these censures, whether it serves, actually, as a correction of offences, or simply as a punishment of them; in both ways purifies the Church, confirms believers, and glorifies God. For in the former case censures justly inflicted bring offenders to repentance, and in the latter case they serve to declare and manifest the ruin that awaits the

[1] Matt., xvi. 19; xxviii. 17, 18.

[2] 1 Cor., v.; 1 Tim., v.; 1 Thess., v. 11–25; John, xx. 19–23.

wicked.[1] And in these, as in all things, they who do not corrupt the word of God, but sincerely, as by his authority, and in his sight, do his will; are unto God a sweet savour in Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish.[2]

3. The Censures of the Church are, like the Church itself, wholly spiritual; they have no civil, political, or temporal sanction—nor any force but that which is purely moral and spiritual. They are executed in the name, and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ; and are grounded exclusively on the written word of God. Being destitute of any of these elements, they are utterly void: while, possessing them all, they carry with them a weight which they who defy are lost, unless they be able to defy the Lord of glory also. When addressed to the members of the Church, they consist of excommunication from it, suspension from its privileges, rebuke, and admonition; to which in the case of such as bear office, are to be added deposition therefrom, and suspension from its exercise. In all cases of restoration of offenders, and removal of Church censures; repentance for the sin committed, and where it is possible, reparation for the injury inflicted, are wholly indispensable; while on the other hand, since it is the glory of Christ that he is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him—and the joy of his Church to embrace all that are his—no ecclesiastical censure can be irrevocable. No one can be more sensible than I am, how inconsistent all the parts of this brief summary are, with the doctrine and the practice of most corrupt, and all apostate Churches; and how different the view of the Church of God and her Discipline herein presented is, from that commonly entertained concerning both by ungodly men. I believe, however, that what I have advanced will be accepted—imperfect as it is, as true, by most sincere disciples of Christ; and few earnest students of the sacred Scriptures, will gainsay it. Supposing I have taught what is true,—it is obvious that mankind at large, and all civil States, have the highest interest in delivering themselves from the opposite view of the Church and her Discipline; which begins by establishing corruption in her own bosom, proceeds by transforming her into a persecutor and an oppressor, and ends by demanding for her the double sword, the triple crown, the keys

[1] Matt., xviii.; 1 Cor., v.; xvi. 22; 1 Tim., i. 20.

[2] 2 Cor., ii. 14–17.

of heaven and hell, and an unlimited despotism, temporal and spiritual, over the human race.

4. What I have said, as yet, has special relation to the internal administration of the Church of God ; the application of his commands and threatenings, to offences and offenders in her own bosom, the use of ecclesiastical Censures by the Church for self-edification, self-purification. There is another and external use of the divine ordinance of Discipline, more general, less personal, perhaps more difficult, yet of the highest necessity and obligation. The Church has immense duties to perform towards the world without. It is through her instrumentality that men are converted to God ; it is her part to carry the glad tidings of salvation to all the families of the earth—and to beseech men to be reconciled to God. But, at the same time, it is her duty not to shun to declare unto them, the whole counsel of God ; and, therefore, the threatenings of God against the impenitent are to be administered by her as faithfully, as the promises of God to the penitent. The Censures of the Church, as I have before intimated, have a relation to these threatenings of God, in some degree analogous to the relation between the sacraments of the Church and the promises of God : and while the latter are to be administered to all God's children, the former are to be administered to all his enemies. The administration is, no doubt, widely different in the two cases ; widely different, as respects censures merely, when administered against those without, and those within the Church. What is insisted on is, that although the administration be different in form, it is, nevertheless, a real administration of the threatenings of God, in the way of ecclesiastical Censures, exceeding the mere preaching of the terrors of God's wrath, revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. The Church is bound and obliged, in the name and by the authority of Christ, and in accordance with the will of God, to rebuke and to condemn all heretics who deny the faith, all schismatics who break the bond of charity, all apostates who deny the Lord that bought them, all idolaters who transfer the glory of the incorruptible God to images of corruptible things, all open enemies of God and his Christ who insult the majesty of heaven and turn the truth of God into a lie ; all, in short, whose sins, of whatever kind, expose them flagrantly to the wrath of God, and come up before the face of the Church

as perpetual hindrances to her, in the work of saving souls, in the maintenance of the truth of which she is the pillar and ground, or in her witness-bearing for the glorious Lord who loved her and gave himself for her. She may no more refuse to administer the threatenings of God against sin and sinners, whom he has exhibited to her as objects of divine abhorrence ; than she may omit to proclaim salvation to every one who will call upon the name of the Lord. And she may settle it in her heart, that exactly in proportion as she grows in grace and in the knowledge of God, and manifests her fidelity to him, and her zeal in his service, she will incur the hatred of all who hate God and his Christ : and at the same time, let her know assuredly, that but for her own steadfast resistance, even unto blood, throughout all past ages, every vestige of the Gospel would long ago have been swept from the earth. Nor has any preceding age demanded of her a wiser or a more exact fidelity, in executing the high duty here disclosed, than the one now passing over her ; the whole world, on one hand, open to the Gospel, and on the other, crowded with every hideous form of sin that can make the Gospel of none effect.

VI.—1. All the Gifts of God which have relation to salvation, whether those supreme ones which have been considered in the preceding chapter, or those treated of under the name of Ordinances in this chapter, have a very special relation to the Church on which he has bestowed them ; but, nevertheless, all of them have, also, very obvious relations to the world of sinful men from amongst whom God's children are taken, to all of whom salvation is offered, and every one of whom will be judged by Jesus Christ in the great day. The Son of God is the Saviour of the world, the Spirit of God is poured out upon all flesh, the Word of God is made known to every creature, the Sabbath is a universal blessing and obligation, the sacraments are the most simple and the most solemn representations to all men of the sum of Gospel truth, the instituted worship of the Church is the most effectual means of teaching the human race all things whatsoever Christ has commanded us and of enforcing it all upon the conscience, and the censures of the Church, as I have just shown, are instituted means used by the Spirit in his work of convincing the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.[1] Now it is the

[1] John, xvi. 7–11.

bounden duty of the Church to give this outward efficacy, according to her utmost ability, to all these gifts and ordinances of God; and so the crowning Ordinanee given to the Church, has the most special reference to the world—namely its Evangelization. And the more perfect is the inward efficacy of all Gifts and Ordinances of God—the more completely is the Church fitted and the more earnestly is she inclined, to give outward efficacy to every one of them; and thus complete in her own divine equipment, to address herself, in the power of God and by the authority of God, to the great work of saving the world. It is God who has given her this blessed work to do: she may not, without impiety to him, and dishonour to herself and ruin to the world, omit to do it. It is God who has bestowed on her every gift which could fit her for its performance—every ordinance which could aid her in its accomplishment—every promise which could render its achievement certain. And then he has staked her crown, and his own glory, upon her success in the great work; and he calls to her from heaven,—Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world![1]

2. The perpetuity of the Church, from generation to generation, depends on the thoroughness with which this work of Evangelization is done by her. If it were to cease altogether, the shortness of human life would cause the almost immediate extinguishment of the Church. If it is done unfaithfully, the proportion of unconverted professors of religion constantly increases—hurrying the Church into formality, deadness, heresy, corruption, apostacy: a fearful course, every step of which is palpable throughout the history of the human race. And yet to do it faithfully, is far beyond any power on earth except that of the Church; and far beyond hers except as the life of God animates all her endeavours. A whole world in utter rebellion against God, is to be subdued: a thousand millions of impenitent sinners are to be converted: every form of false religion is to be extirpated: the mental darkness of the human race is to be enlightened—its temporal degradation is to be removed. In attempting this—toils, and sufferings, and self-denials, and dangers are to be encountered, which no other end would justify. To gain any triumph, and to secure every one as it is gained, to prepare us for the very doing of the work and to maintain the Church

[1] John, xvi. 33.

in a posture to do any part of it—the temporal means which are demanded for a thousand necessities, at home and abroad, must never cease to flow into the treasury of the Lord, and in the course of ages must exceed all computation. Wisdom too, apparently more than human, there must be, to direct all the immense forces of every sort, which are organized by God unto this vast end : an unwavering pursuit by millions of men, from age to age, of the one immense object, through the same divinely appointed means : a consecration which has no limit, and which recurs forever, of the purest, the best, the greatest that adorn the Church, to one part or another of this greatest of all attempts. If there be in this world a class of persons who have an object and a career for which nothing but the grace of God can qualify them—and in the pursuit of which nothing but unqualified devotion to God can sustain them : surely that is the class of persons whose hearts are consumed with the desire and the endeavour to execute this crowning Ordinance of God. No zeal can surpass the zeal they need ; no knowledge can exceed the knowledge they require ; no patience, no courage, no perseverance, no activity is too great to be exacted of them ; no faith is beyond that which their trials demand ; and blessed be God, no recompense can equal that which God has in store for them. In the meantime, their hearts are sustained by every consideration drawn from the great duty which God requires of them, and the great honour he has put upon them, and the great reward he has laid up for them—as the hope of their high calling is more and more sealed unto them, and the hour of their entrance upon their eternal rest draws nigher and nigher. Oh ! that every follower of Christ was of the same mind with those, who lead the forefront of that glorious array, whose banner has always floated over the hottest of the conflict with every enemy of God ! Oh ! that the heart of every soldier of the cross responded, as the watchword of the unconquerable host swells along its ranks—Brethren ! Advance the banner of the Lord !

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM: ITS NATURE AND DESIGN: SUBJECTS OF IT: MODE OF ADMINISTRATION: APOSTOLIC PRACTICE.

I. 1. Circumcision: its origin and Nature.—2. Its Relation to Christian Baptism.—3. Mission and Baptism of John.—4. The Baptism of the Apostles, during Christ's personal Ministry.—5. Institution of Christian Baptism, by the Risen Saviour.—6. Outpouring of the Spirit with Power; Relation thereof to Christian Baptism.—7. Certainty of these Divine Mysteries: and their Sum.—8. Their relation to the doctrine of God, and of Salvation—II. 1. The relation between Baptism and the blessings of which it is the Seal.—2. All who have title to the Blessings, have title to the Seal.—3. Vindication in eleven propositions, of the Right of the Infant Seed of believers, to Christian Baptism.—4. Effects of the neglect, and of the exercise of this right.—III. 1. Effect of the mode of Baptism on the validity of the Ordinance.—2. Immersion in commemoration of the Burial of Christ, a total perversion of the Sacrament of Baptism.—3. Exposition of the Scriptural Doctrine of Baptism—as related to the death and burial of Christ.—4. Various Scriptural Senses of the term *Baptism:* Authority of Christ to fix the sense of this term, and the mode of this Sacrament.—5. Proof in five propositions of the mode of administration intended by Christ.—IV. 1. Apostolic Practice: Day of Pentecost, and the Baptism then administered.—2. Evidence afforded by this great example: stated in three propositions.—3. First Gentile Baptism.—4. Evidence afforded by it, stated in three propositions.—5. Doctrine of Baptism deduced from the Apostolic Practice.

I.—1. When Abram was ninety and nine years old the Lord appeared unto him, and under his name, the Almighty God, renewed unto him all his promises and enlarged them, changed his name to Abraham—father of many nations—reduced the whole into the form of an everlasting covenant to be a God unto him and to his seed after him, and instituted the sacrament of circumcision as the perpetual token of the covenant, and the common seal of all its stipulations.[1] He who entered into this covenant with Abraham declared himself to be Jehovah—and the divine names under which he binds himself, express, in a peculiar manner, his almightiness and his all-sufficiency.* In the sacrament which is the outward token of this covenant, lies the first step in

[1] Gen., xvii. 1–14.

* יְהוָה אֵל שַׁדַּי

the separate organization of the Church of God considered as visible: a sacrament which, under three dispensations of the Covenant of Grace, and under two very distinct forms has continued for about four thousand years,* to be a sign and a seal of God's grace to his people. Moses simply continued, by a positive enactment, the sacrament of circumcision as he found it established amongst his people ;[1] and engrafted it into the dispensation he was sent to organize out of the descendants of Abraham through Isaac, upon one branch of the great promises sealed by this sacrament. Christ himself plainly tells us that this was the relation of this sacrament to the Levitical dispensation ;[2] and therein points out the nature of its relation to the whole Jewish system. It was the token of all the promises of a strictly personal kind, made to Abraham: the token, also, of all the promises made in favour of Ishmael and his posterity, and Esau and his posterity: the token, also, of the far higher promises, both temporal and spiritual, made to the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob—who were very specially heirs according to the promise of God. In this respect circumcision was the basis of the Hebrew commonwealth, and of the peculiar system of the Jews in all its aspects. But its fundamental sense and use were to signify and seal divine grace, and to bind and oblige men to the performance of all duties corresponding thereto.[3] And therefore, God called it from the beginning a token of the covenant between him and Abraham,[4] and declared two thousand years afterwards, by the mouth of Paul, that Abraham received it as a seal of the righteousness of faith—the great stipulation of the covenant, that Abraham should be heir of the world, not being through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.[5] Wherefore, and in like manner, justification was sealed by it to all believers, of whom Abraham, through this covenant, is the common Father :[6] by which, also, sanctification was signified and sealed

* The chronology adopted in this, and the former Treatise, is that which is commonly accepted as settled upon the foundation of the labours of Petavius and his successors. This is done, not as assenting to the accuracy of any part of it, preceding the Christian era, but because any discussions on such a topic, in the present state of opinion, and in connection with such labours as I have been attempting, would only perplex my general subject, even if they cleared up the chronology of it before the establishment of the Gospel Church—which was far more than I could expect.

[1] Lev., xii. 3. [2] John, vii. 22. [3] Deut., x. 16.
[4] Gen., xvii. 11. [5] Rom., iv. 11, 12. [6] Gal., iii. 7.

unto them, through this sacrament. For God promised to circumcise the hearts of his ancient people, as well as to bring them into the promised land.[1] And in truth, in the very nature of things, he was not a Jew who was one outwardly, neither was that circumcision which was outward in the flesh ; but he was a Jew who was one inwardly, and circumcision was of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter.[2]

2. We are not left any room to believe that the particular form of circumcision under which this great and permanent sacrament was first instituted,—under which it endured as the seal of all the promises for two thousand years, and endures still as the token of a portion of them ; was intended by God to continue, as the token between God and his Church visible, and a sign and seal of covenanted grace, any longer than the glorious dispensation of the Gospel should be fully manifested on earth. Why, demanded Peter of the Assembly of Apostles and Elders, met to consider this very question—why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples ?[3] My sentence is—said James,—after proving that it had always been the purpose of God to visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name ;—My sentence is that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God. And the whole Assembly, divinely authorized and divinely taught, broke in two the heavy yoke of the ceremonial law, and of circumcision as a token of it.[4] The Apostle Paul, largely proving these things to the Churches of Galatia, told them, that if they persisted in being circumcised, Christ profited them nothing—for they not only rejected his grace thereby, but made themselves debtors to do the whole law.[5] For Christ had expressly commanded, that Baptism with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, should be the form of this sacrament, from the moment of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, on the day of Pentecost.[6] For then the long predicted time would be fully come, for the Church of God to be opened to the long excluded Gentile world,[7] and for the proclamation of that New Covenant, so long predicted—not according to the covenant under which Israel was brought up out of Egypt, but according to an everlasting covenant, under which all shall know the Lord.[8] We

[1] Deut., xxx. 6. [2] Rom., ii. 28, 29. [3] Acts, xv. 10. [4] Acts, xv. *passim.*
[5] Gal., v. 1–6. [6] Matt., xxviii. 19 ; Luke, xxiv. 49 ; Acts, i. 8.
[7] Amos, ix. 11, 12 ; Acts, xv. 15–17. [8] Jer., xxxi. 31–37.

may therefore confidently say that circumcision was the primeval sacrament of the dispensation of the covenant of grace, instituted, by God, in Abraham and his seed: that it was a token between God and every one beneficially interested in that covenant, of the covenant itself and of every promise made in it: and, as such, was accepted by Moses, and engrafted into the Jewish dispensation, as the foundation thereof. Ordained by God in the flesh of his covenant people—the seed of his friend Abraham, it became the first mark of the visible separation of God's people from the world—the first step in the visible organization of the Church of God; and as such, its main use and significance were, that it was a token and a seal of the deliverance of believers in God from sin and endless death, by the only way in which God ever delivered any—to wit, by the Son of God as the Saviour of sinners—whose advent was the chief stipulation of the covenant: and that its period, under the form originally given, was until the end of all that was legal, typical and ceremonial, and the complete manifestation of divine grace and truth, through Jesus Christ—by whose command, Baptism with water, in the name of the Triune God, took its place as a token and seal of the covenant of grace, under the Gospel dispensation.

3. The Scriptures clearly explain the mission of John the Baptist, as the forerunner of Christ, together with the nature and whole course, fruits and end thereof.* It is repeatedly declared, that one grand part of that mission, was to baptize the people, in the preparation of the way of the Lord, and with explicit reference to his immediate appearance in his personal ministry. Behold, said John, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, after me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.[1] It is therefore certain that John was divinely commanded to baptize: that this baptism had a di-

* Luke, iii. 1–22; Matt., iii. *passim*; xi. 1–19. [1] John, i. 29–33.

rect relevancy to the immediate manifestation of Jesus Christ, as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world; and that Jesus Christ would initiate a better baptism than one of mere water unto repentance, which was the nature of John's baptism, as explained by himself, while he describes that of Christ as a baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire.[1] The baptism of John, therefore, bore the same relation to Christian baptism, that John himself bore to Christ. It was not instituted by Christ,—but preceded his ministry, and had relation only to that ministry, as has been shown,—and as the baptism of Christ himself, by John, abundantly confirms.* Moreover, the Apostle Paul, not only baptized disciples who had already been baptized unto John's baptism; but he explained why he did it, in the sense I have already stated.[2]

4. The Lord Jesus did not personally baptize; but his disciples did, with his approbation, in his presence, and as part of the work appropriate to them, while his ministry continued: indeed it is expressly stated that they did this before the close of John's ministry.† Nor in all the testimony of John to Christ, as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, is there anything more clear and full, than his exposition of these very circumstances, when he was informed of them.[3] Still the decisive fact must be remembered, that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision: sent only, so far as his personal ministry went, to the lost sheep of the house of Israel: he came unto his own and his own received him not.‡ And this was all involved so deeply in his Mediatorial work, that it might not be otherwise: and even the truth of God, the promises made unto the fathers, and the call of the Gentiles themselves, exacted, as is declared by Paul, this very form of the coming of Messiah.[4] He neither took down the Jewish system, nor set up the Christian system in its stead; but on the contrary, amongst his most wonderful teachings, were his expositions of the spirituality of the dispensation to which his own mission put an end. Having invested his Apostles with all power, and designated the circumstances in which they should receive all fitness; his reserve was so great, that although he instituted the sacrament of his body and blood while he observed the Passover for the last time, he did not then

[1] Matt., iii. 11.
[2] Acts, xix. 1–5.
[3] John, iii. 26–36.
* Matt., iii. 13–17; xxi. 23–27.
† John, iv. 2; iii. 22–24.
‡ Rom., xv. 8; Matt., xv. 24; John, i. 11.
[4] Rom., xv. 8–12.

say to his Apostles that the sacrament, which had commemorated his own sacrifice so long, and which was to commemorate it to the end of time—must, thenceforward change its form. In like manner, not a word is recorded which lends any support to the idea, that John believed, or that Christ taught, or that the Apostles understood, that either the baptism of John, or the baptism habitually practised by the Apostles, during the ministry of Christ, was to supplant the sacrament of circumcision. On the contrary, it was not until long after Christianity had opened its bosom to the Gentile world, that the Apostles themselves could see, that the true Christian Baptism instituted by Christ after his resurrection, was, itself, to supplant the bloody and national form of the ancient sacrament.[1] In fine, as the baptism of John bore to Christian baptism the same relation that John bore to Christ, as I have shown ; so the baptism practised by the Apostles, during the personal ministry of Christ, bore to the baptism instituted, by Christ, after his resurrection, the same relation that the ministry of Christ, in the flesh, as a minister of the circumcision, bore to the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, administered by Christ from the right hand of the majesty on high. Both these forms of baptism were of God ; but neither of them superseded circumcision — neither of them was identical with complete Christian Baptism, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, expressly instituted by Christ, after his resurrection. They were the steps of the transition, by which the Church of God passed from the legal to the Gospel state: by which the Sacrament of Pardon,—if we may venture, with all the Fathers, to call it so—passed from its bloody and foreshadowing state, into its perfect state, as attested by the Spirit, the water, and the blood already shed.

5. We arrive, at length, at the institution of the final and perfect form of this Sacrament. The testimony of John the Baptist, is ended : the work of Christ as a minister of the circumcision, is accomplished. Crucified, dead, buried,—risen again on the third day,—appearing repeatedly to his Apostles and others during forty days—he is at length, while he blessed them, parted from them, and carried up into heaven. During this most remarkable interval between his resurrection and his open and glorious ascent, from their very presence; the eleven went into

[1] Acts, xxi. 17–26.

Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. Seeing him, worshipping him, and, strange to say, some doubting, Jesus spoke unto them those sublime words, which leave to men no alternative between adoring him and denouncing him ;—All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth ! Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* He had said unto Nicodemus, near the commencement of his ministry, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven ;[1]—and now, having triumphed over death and hell, his command is—Teach,—Baptize :—Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world ! Go into all the world—teach all nations—disciple them all—teach them all to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And as they hear, and believe, and live, gather them together as my disciples. Baptize all who are mine, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Here is the warrant—here the institution—the command—the promise : all that remains will be added when Pentecost is fully come.[2] It is the crucified and risen Saviour who institutes Christian Baptism, in the hands of his Apostles, and lays it as distinctly at the foundation of the Gospel Church, as circumcision was laid at the foundation of the visible Church. The work of the Spirit in us, and the benefits signified and sealed to us by the Sacrament with water, and the Sacrament in the body and blood of Christ, summarily involve all that our salvation demands. The institution of the Supper immediately preceded the sacrifice of Christ, to which it so closely relates : the institution of Baptism immediately preceded the outpouring of the Spirit, whose work it so distinctly attests.

6. The outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost—which was the promise of the Father, which Jesus had said he would himself send upon his Apostles, by which they would be endued with power from on high, and for which he directed them to tarry in the city of Jerusalem ;[3] initiates, in absolute completeness, the kingdom of God with power.[4] Complete to teach—complete to disciple—complete to baptize. And that same day, about three thousand souls, gladly received the word spoken

* Matt., xxviii. 16–19 ; Mark, xvi. 15, 16. [1] John, iii. 5. [2] Luke, xxiv. 49
[3] Luke, xxiv. 49. [4] Matt., vi. 13.

by Peter, and were baptized, and so added to Christ,—the first fruits of the Spirit given with power. It is true that no one was ever saved except through Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and men: but it is equally true that the knowledge of that Saviour has been constantly increased, through all the dispensations of the Covenant of Grace, and that under the Gospel dispensation it has reached the climax, until his second coming. In like manner, no one was ever saved independently of the quickening and sanctifying work of the Divine Spirit; but, at the same time, the saving work of the Spirit had universal relevancy to the work of Christ, and the knowledge thereof attainable by man, and so the saving dispensation of the Spirit, with power, was manifested coincidently with the miraculous testimony he gave of the glorification of Christ.[1] Christ himself, in the very institution of this Sacrament, made the distinction between discipleing men, and baptizing them: a distinction which puts an end to the pretext of Sacramental Grace. In like manner, the whole of what occurred on Pentecost, establishes the distinction between the saving and the extraordinary work of the Divine Spirit,—thus putting an end to all pretext that regeneration is miraculous, and also to all pretext that it is not now the effect of the saving work of the Spirit with power. Nor is it less clear, from all that occurred, and all that followed, that, without the divine word there is no authority for any Church, or any Sacrament, just as there can be no efficacy in any independently of the divine Spirit. It is as a method of divine instruction, that a foundation is laid in any Sacrament, to make it a method of divine grace; and it is only as it becomes a method of divine knowledge and grace, that the Spirit of God deals with the souls of men through it. And, as both the Word and Spirit have exclusive application to fallen men, through the work of Jesus Christ; it is only so far as he is exhibited and applied, that any Sacrament has any authority, or any efficacy. In Baptism we make profession of Jesus Christ—that is, we receive and rely on him and the doctrine taught concerning him: and in the mode of doing this, we are unreservedly dedicated to the Triune God. What follows to the worthy recipient is fellowship with the death and resurrection of Christ;* salvation through grace, by the

[1] Acts, ii. 33.

* Rom., vi. 3–6; Col., ii. 9–13.

washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.[1]

7. Of all these sublime mysteries, there are three, says the Apostle John, that bear record in heaven : the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost ; and these three are one. There are three also, that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood ; and these three agree in one. Well does he add, that, if human testimony can prove anything, here is divine testimony which cannot be resisted. Of these five witnesses, one is common to heaven and earth, and cannot be deceived. But—so the beloved Apostle urges—he that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself ; and, thereby, the record that God hath given to us eternal life and that this life is in his Son, is sacramentally sealed to the believer, both by the three that bear record in heaven and the three that bear record in earth.[2] It is certain, therefore, that Baptism is a Sacrament of the Covenant of Grace, appertaining by the institution of Christ, to the Gospel Church : wherein, by the use of water, through the ministry of the word, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, believers testify, through the work of the Spirit, their union with Christ and their communion with each other ; whereby they are established in their fellowship with the death and resurrection of Christ, and have the benefits thereof signified and sealed unto them, amongst which benefits are remission of sins, the new obedience, and eternal life ; they, therein, binding themselves unto all the duties which spring from faith and repentance, unto the salvation of their own souls, and the glory of the Triune God.

8. Presenting in a condensed, but complete form, the doctrine of salvation by grace, through Jesus Christ, the two Sacraments of the Gospel Church set before us, distinctly, the nature and work of God himself. If we had nothing but the divine formulary of Baptism to teach us, we could not fail to know, that the mode of the Divine existence is that of three persons in one essence ; and that our own destiny is completely involved in this transcendent mystery. Nor can we contemplate this ordinance with attention and avoid perceiving that it teaches the participation of all three of these divine persons, in the matter of our salvation, in such a way, that, while it exhibits the unity

[1] Titus, iii. 4–7

[2] 1 John, v. 4–12.

of the divine essence to be the unity of a threefold personality ; it involves, as to us, our former pollution, our present repentance toward God, our faith toward the Son, our pardon by the Father, our purification by the Holy Ghost, and as the result, our future and endless salvation. A sacrament of the Church of the living God, it is a sign—a token—of that eternal Covenant of Grace, of which the Church is an outbirth, and a seal of every stipulation of it, of every promise made in it, of every blessing conferred by it. It is a divine mystery—a great secret of God—opened to the spiritual insight of his children ; and they who will read it truly, will find great light and great peace.

II.—1. They to whom covenanted blessings belong, have a perfectly clear right to participate in the enjoyment of whatever token of that covenant is provided by its own terms, as the seal of those blessings. And whatever blessings the covenant confers, those precisely, neither more nor less, are signified and sealed to those whom the covenant embraces. It may be that the sign and seal has relation to such blessings as need to be continually repeated ; in which case it also may require frequent repetition. This is true of the Sacrament of the broken body and shed blood of Christ, by which his people are nourished continually ; and so the Lord's Supper is often celebrated. But, it may be, that the sign and seal has relation to such blessings, as, in their nature, can be conferred on us but once ; and for that reason, such a Sacrament cannot be repeated without superstition, or impiety. This is true of the Sacrament of Baptism. We cannot be ingrafted into Christ but once ; we cannot be born again but once ; and so Baptism cannot be lawfully administered a second time. And such has been the universal judgment of the Church of God, and is the unquestioned doctrine of the Scriptures. If it were true that the Sacraments had an inherent efficacy, no one, lawfully baptized, could fail of being born again, and ingrafted into Christ, at the moment of his baptism. I have abundantly proved that nothing of this sort is taught by God, or true in fact. The blessings and benefits signified and sealed, by the Sacrament of Baptism, incapable as they are, in their own nature, of being conferred on us more than once ; were never stipulated, by God, to be conferred along with the ordinance. On the contrary, Abraham received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet

being uncircumcised.[1] So far are the blessings signified and sealed in this Sacrament, from being limited, for the efficacy given to the Sacrament by the Holy Ghost, to the moment of its administration ;[2] that they extend over our whole lives, involve the very existence of the life of God in our souls, and relate to the most perfectly sovereign of all the acts of God's grace towards the elect, under his eternal covenant, namely, the time and circumstances of their new creation.*

2. It is just as clear, from the New Testament Scriptures, that every one who professes to be a follower of Christ must be baptized with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, as it is from the Old Testament Scriptures, that every Jew was circumcised ; and the command of Christ is as explicit, that his disciples must be thus baptized, as the command of God was, that the seed of Abraham must be circumcised.† And the testimony of Scripture is clear, and the judgment of the Church of God has been uniform, that every adult believer in the divine Saviour is entitled to be baptized, upon a credible profession of repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ.[3] I do not doubt that the right of the infant seed of believers is, also, perfectly clear, to a participation in that Sacrament. The steadfast—I regret to add the contemptuous—denial of this right by one of the Christian denominations, and the ceaseless outcry against it by multitudes of heretics ; make it proper to vindicate it somewhat specially. This I will attempt to do, in a series of distinct propositions, as much condensed as is consistent with a clear statement of the argument contained in each ; what I propose to establish being the absolute right of the infant children of believers, to participation in the Sacrament of Baptism under the Gospel dispensation.

3. (*a*) *The original Covenant of God.* It is indisputably certain that God's covenant with Abraham contained stipulations and promises, whose execution sacramentally created by means of circumcision, a visible and separate Church out of the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob—and that their seed were obliged, by express command of God, to be circumcised when eight days old, in execution of that covenant.[4] But, this

[1] Rom., iv. 10–12.
[2] Acts, viii. 13–23.
* John, iii. 8 ; 1 Cor., ii. 11.
† Matt., xxviii. 19 ; Gen., xvii. 12
[3] Acts, xx, 17–27.
[4] Gen., xvii. *passim.*

was expressly an everlasting covenant between God and Abraham and his seed, that he would be their God ; and by it the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises pertained to Israel :[1] and the chief stipulation of it, sealed by the sacrament of circumcision, was the promise of the Saviour of the world, and of gratuitous justification through the righteousness of faith.* Therefore, the children of believers being expressly embraced by an everlasting, spiritual covenant, in the original organization of the visible Church of the living God, and expressly entitled to have the promises sacramentally sealed to them ; are, under the present Gospel form of that same Church, in possession of the same right—and should be baptized.

(*b*) *Confirmed under every Dispensation.* It is indisputably certain, that the children of believers were, of right, and in fact, accepted and circumcised as members of the visible Church, from its foundation, through the whole patriarchal dispensation, from the Covenant with Abraham to the giving of the Law, through Moses : and through the whole Dispensation of the Law and the Prophets, to the coming of the Son of God : and through his personal ministry, as a minister of the circumcision—his own circumcision being a signal example and test of what had been universal in the visible Church from its origin two thousand years before.[2] But, the kingdom of God on earth, whether presented as the Messianic kingdom, or as the new creation, or as the Church of God—is still the same : and that Church, whether presented without or with a visible organization, and if with a visible organization then under every successive dispensation is still the same chosen and beloved Bride of the Lamb : and now since Pentecost, manifested under the Gospel form—it remains the same Church of the living God, elect in his eternal Covenant of Grace. Therefore, the infant children of believers are still to be accepted as of right, and in fact, members of the visible Church, and are to receive in like manner as before, the sacramental seal: the variation in the form of the sacrament, in no wise affecting their rights.

(*c*) *Immutability of the Gifts and Calling of God.* The spiritual gifts and blessings of God, which are manifestations of

[1] Rom., ix. 4.

* Rom., iv. *passim* ; Gal., iii. *passim* ; Acts, iii. 25, 26 ; Gen., xxii. 18 ; xxvi. 4.

[2] Luke, ii. 21–40.

his grace—and the vocation of his people by him—are all immutable. And these precious truths are nowhere taught more clearly, than in the connection of all of them with God's ancient people, and in such connection with them, even after the rejection and crucifixion of the Saviour, and after the calling of the Gentiles, as to establish the perpetuity of every right, in every creature, founded on such divine gifts, blessings and vocation.* But, undeniably, the children of believers have received of God that vocation which he declares to be immutable, and all those immutable gifts and blessings which appertain to membership in the visible Church were signified and sealed to them, sacramentally and without question, from the call of Abraham till the ascension of Christ. And the clearest statement of the principle here involved, is made by the great Apostle to the Gentiles, while Christian children were actually enjoying the rights his argument establishes, throughout Christendom. Therefore, the seed of believers are still entitled to the sign and seal of God's immutable grace and vocation through Jesus Christ—which, for them in the Gospel Church, is Christian Baptism.

(*d*) *The Oath of God.* The impossibility of the failure of the immutable counsel and promise of God, and of the grace and vocation connected therewith, is confirmed unto the heirs of promise by the oath of God: so that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, they might have a strong consolation.† But, that oath of God was sworn to Abraham, the Father of the faithful, in whose flesh and the flesh of his seed, the Church of God became visible by the sacrament of circumcision, which Christ, who was the chief promise sealed in circumcision, supplanted by baptism, which he ordered to be administered to those innumerable heirs of promise which Paul proves are the same innumerable seed, in behalf of whom God took the oath of confirmation to Abraham. Therefore, whatever title Isaac and Jacob had to their part in the divine blessings they received, and to the use of the seal thereof; and whatever title the Jewish Church and people had to their part and to the seal thereof; and whatever title the Gospel Church has to her part and to the seal thereof; precisely the same title to their part and to the seal thereof,—which is baptism—the seed of believers now have, by the promise, the covenant, and the oath of God.

* Numb., xxxiii. 19–24; Rom., xi. 29–36. † Gen., xxii. 16–19; Heb., vi. 12–20.

(*e*) *The Way of Salvation.* The righteousness of Christ is the sole meritorious ground of the salvation of sinners. That righteousness is imputed to us by God, as the ground of our justification, and is wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, in our regeneration and sanctification. It is by faith in Christ that we receive his imputed righteousness, and faith in Christ is the grace perpetually manifested by the regenerated and sanctified soul. And the Scriptures expressly assert, that circumcision was the seal of the righteousness of faith—and was so received from the first, and so taken by Abraham as the father of all believers—to whom righteousness ever would be imputed; without which he could not have been the heir of the world.[1] This whole way of salvation is retained and more clearly exhibited in the Gospel Church, than before; the bloody form of the sacrament being discarded by Christ, and the use of water in the name of the three persons of the Godhead being substituted by him, to make the seal of the righteousness of faith, accord more perfectly with the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. But, under the Abrahamic Covenant, and throughout the Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations and during the ministry of Christ, the seed of believers were entitled to receive, and did receive, that sacrament which was the seal of the righteousness of faith—through which alone can sinners be saved. Therefore, to deny to them under the Gospel Church, the use of the sacrament of baptism, is not only to reverse, as to them, the whole method of salvation; but it is to put them wholly out of the provisions of the Covenant of Grace, in which they had been expressly and sacramentally embraced, from the foundation of the visible Church. It is to do this, not only without one word of God to justify it, but against his immutable promise and vocation, against his everlasting covenant, and against his oath expressly sworn to confirm them all. It is to do it in contempt of the direct command of Christ not to forbid, but to suffer little children to come unto him:* taking the seal of the righteousness which alone fits us for the kingdom of heaven, absolutely from those of whom the Lord of that kingdom has declared that of such is the kingdom itself, and leaving them, under the Gospel dispensation, no alternative but the universal damnation of all who die in childhood, or their

[1] Rom., iv. 11–17.

* Matt., xix. 13–15; xviii. 2–6.

salvation outside of the Covenant of Grace, and independently of the righteousness of Christ!

(*f*) *The Teaching of Christ and his Apostles.* Christ being a minister of the circumcision, and at the same time the great Teacher of men, and all the while the Son of God and the only Mediator between God and men; what he said and did must be conclusive. Moreover Peter and Paul being both of them inspired Apostles of the Lord, acting in his name, by his authority, and with plenary inspiration; both of them Jews, and the former sent specially to the circumcision, while the latter was sent specially to the uncircumcision: we are obliged to accept their teaching—as embracing both the Jewish-Christian and the Gentile-Christian aspect of the relation of the seed of believers to the Church of God, under the Gospel dispensation. It is impossible to doubt what that relation was under all previous dispensations back to the origin of the visible Church: and I have shown, under various aspects, that this conclusively settles and was designed to settle their relation to it now. But, Christ, whose mission closed the Jewish dispensation, and the Holy Ghost, whose mission opened the Christian dispensation with power on Pentecost, and afterwards to the Gentiles; have both taught us with great distinctness, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.[1] And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.[2] Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.[3] And he took them up in his arms, put his hands on them, and blessed them.[4] Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do alway behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.[5] All these are the words of Jesus. Can it possibly be imagined, that the first passage meant precisely what it asserts concerning the relation of man to the Kingdom of God; and that the other passages did not mean what they assert, concerning the relation of the child of that man, to the Kingdom of God? Again, Peter, on the day of Pentecost, full of the Holy Ghost, demonstrated to the immense congregation of Jews who

[1] John, iii. 5. [2] Matt., xviii. 2, 3. [3] Luke, xviii. 16.
[4] Mark, xvi. 16. [5] Matt., xviii. 10.

were gathered from every quarter of the earth—and of whom about three thousand were baptized the same day—that the crucified and risen Saviour whom he had preached to them, was the sum of all the promises—and that the promise of him, was unto them, and unto their children :* a hereditary promise—appertaining to endless generations of the seed of believers—precisely as God covenanted with thousands of generations of them that love him, in the second commandment.[1] Again, Paul, writing to a Gentile Church—in a Gentile city, where he had laboured amongst the Gentiles for a year and six months, by express command of God ; not only tells them that the child of a believing parent, so far from being unclean, is holy ; but makes this incontestable truth, the ground of his proof that the unbelieving wife is sanctified to the believing husband—and of his decision that the believing wife is not religiously bound to separate from her unbelieving husband.[2] Therefore, Christ, in closing the Jewish dispensation and laying down those truths which were common to all Dispensations, as well as those which are peculiar to the Dispensation of the Gospel ; and the Holy Ghost in setting up the Gospel Dispensation, especially by Peter amongst the Jews, and by Paul amongst the Gentiles, and in recording for everlasting instruction, the way of eternal life for all mankind ; have alike confirmed the unalterable relation of the seed of believers to God, to his Kingdom, to his Covenant, and, by inevitable consequence, to the seal thereof,—which in the Christian Church, is baptism.

(*g*) *Practice of the Apostles.* In the small and then recently gathered Church at Philippi, where the Gospel seems to have been first preached in Europe, two households, at least, are mentioned as having been baptized—namely that of Lydia, and that of the jailor.[3] In the Church of Corinth, besides others alluded to, two households are named, to wit, that of Crispus the chief ruler of the Synagogue, and that of Stephanus whose family were the first fruits of Achaia; these households being, except Gaius the host of Paul, the only persons he baptized in Corinth.† In Cesarea, Cornelius the centurion, together with his kinsmen and near friends, were baptized by the Apostle Peter under immediate supernatural guidance, being the first fruits of the Gen-

* Acts, ii. 39; iii. 25 [1] Exod., xx. 6. [2] 1 Cor., vii. 14.
[3] Acts, xvi. 15, 33. † Acts, xviii. 8 ; 1 Cor., i. 16 ; xvi. 16.

tiles.[1] These cases are but conspicuous examples of a uniform practice; the case of Cornelius and his household, being singularly important, and as such, considered and approved by the Assembly of the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem.[2] But, besides the certainty arising out of the nature of the case, that in multitudes of households habitually baptized everywhere by the Apostles, there must have been many children; the form of the divine expressions, and the force of the terms divinely chosen in making the repeated statement of these cases, oblige us to understand, that in speaking of these households it is expressly intended to include children.* Therefore, upon the face of the inspired Acts of the Apostles and Apostolic Epistles, where we must look for guidance as to Apostolic practice; it seems impossible to avoid the conclusion that they did what had been uniformly done from the foundation of the visible Church; namely, admit the seed of believers into sacramental union with the people of God, which they did by the sacrament of baptism, to which, therefore, such persons are still entitled.

(*h*) *Testimony of the Church of God.* From the moment in which the Church became visible and separate from the world, to the present moment, her testimony has been uniform through four thousand years. The command of God was express that every man child of the seed of Abraham, in all their generations, should be circumcised.[3] And so it continued unquestioned for two thousand years, through the Abrahamic and Mosaic dispensations, and during the personal ministry of Christ. The manner in which the form of the Sacrament was changed,—passing through John's baptism, and through that administered by the disciples of Christ during his ministry,—and in which it acquired

[1] Acts, x. *passim;* xi. 1–18. [2] Acts, xv. 6–29.

* Thus, a Bishop must be * * * one that ruleth well *his own house*—ιδιου οικου—having his *children*—τεκνα—in subjection. (1 Tim., iii. 2, 4.) For if a man know not how to rule *his own house*, του ιδιου οικου, &c. Again, the deacons * * * ruling *children*—τεκνων, (ver. 12.) Again; the younger women marry, *bear children, guide the house*—τεκνογονειν—οικοδεσποτειν, &c. The editor of Calmet has cited fifty examples, and examined three hundred, in which the word *house*—οικος—(Crispus * * * with his *house*, &c.)—denotes a family embracing *children*. The use in the Hebrew was even more extensive—Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's *house;* and then the chief particulars are added—closing with—nor anything, &c. Not an Israelite in the world, probably, had a house then. בֵּית יְהוָה and בֵּן יְהוָה were both used to express the family of God—the whole Israelitish people.

[3] Gen., xvii. 9–11.

its present form with water in the name of the Trinity, by the express institution of Christ after his resurrection, and was fully initiated under the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, and by the baptism of three thousand persons, on the day of Pentecost : all this, the Scriptures clearly state. In this final and perfect form it was constantly administered to the seed of believers, by the Apostles during their whole ministry after Pentecost. This immense testimony, all to the same effect, is all derived from the oracles of God, and covers the entire existence of the visible Church during all the dispensations under which she received all her sacraments, and all the written word of God, and was gradually developed from a totally inorganized state, into a perfect Gospel state. The subsequent testimony, during nearly eighteen centuries to the present time, as compared with that already stated ; is more important as showing her own conformity to the revealed will of God, than as adding anything to the testimony of the sacred Scriptures. Still her testimony has been steadfast in all ages, and in all countries, and under all vicissitudes. The right of the seed of believers to participate of the sacrament of baptism, has always been, not only allowed, but vindicated, by an immense majority of the true followers of Christ, out of all comparison with those who have denied that right ; and during the greater part of those eighteen centuries, that right was hardly so much as questioned by any one professing to be a Christian. But, if the truth of a fact can be supposed capable of being established, by any testimony human or divine ; then it is proved, that, in point of fact, the seed of believers have always received in the visible Church of God, the seal of the righteousness of faith. And if the existence of a right can be supposed capable of being incontrovertible, and its use capable of being put beyond question ; then the right of the seed of believers to the use of that sacrament, which, under both its forms has been uninterruptedly enjoyed by them, during the entire existence of the visible Church, is wholly beyond doubt. Therefore, if God has had, and now has, a Church visible on earth, and that Church has had and now has, his Spirit and his word ; and if so existing and so endowed, she is worthy of belief as to any matter of fact, or worthy of trust as to any matter of right ; then the certainty is complete, that the seed of believers must receive Christian Baptism.

(*i*) *The Nature of the Case.* The evidence upon which re-

vealed religion rests is, no doubt, different in important respects, from that on which natural religion rests ; and the truths and duties of the two are, in many respects, very clearly distinguishable. Yet the God of nature is also the God of Grace ; and the God of providence is the God, both of nature and of Grace ; and the course of providence is the manifestation of his secret will, as contrasted with his revealed will, considered as the God both of nature and of Grace. The fundamental principles of all his acts can no more conflict with each other, than his Attributes can be inconsistent with each other, or than he can deny himself. But, while the relation of husband and wife founded in nature, is not only sanctified by grace, but is made an image of the mystical union between Christ and his Church ; the corresponding relation between parent and child, through which nature itself continues to exist, is so thoroughly ingrafted into grace that it is the uniform type of God's relation to his elect, and of the inbeing of the Father and the eternal Word. Grace sanctifies this relation, providence proceeds upon it, nature perishes without it, every dispensation of God respects, assumes, uses it, while every thing in man revolts at the violation of it, and the nexus of the universe is broken by infringing it. Therefore, to demand that this principle shall be eliminated from the religion of Jesus, which is the perfect form of true religion, and the chief means of blessedness to the universe and of glory to God ; and that a principle the reverse of it—wholly unknown to and incompatible with nature, providence, and grace, shall be substituted for it ; is to demand of the Church, who is the common mother of us all, a sacramental renunciation, not only of her fruitfulness, but of her own filiation to God, and her own espousals to Christ.

(*j*) *The Nature of the Sacrament itself.* As the undeniable effect of the fall of the first Adam, who was only a living soul, is the production of a depraved nature in every one of his ordinary descendants, and this anterior to the personal consciousness of the person, and independent of it ; it is far from being competent to us to say, that it is impossible for the incarnation, obedience, and sacrifice of the second Adam, who was a quickening Spirit, and the Lord from heaven, to heal that depraved nature, anterior to and independent of our personal consciousness. The tie created by the covenant of grace, cannot be weaker than that

created by the covenant of works,—and spiritual regeneration by the Holy Ghost is as real and as explicable as natural generation. To assert, under such circumstances the natural pollution of infants, and at the same time deny the possibility of the spiritual purification of infants, is self-contradictious. But, baptism is the sacramental expression of both the sets of facts just stated. It is the shed blood and perfect righteousness of Christ that save us : faith, even in an adult person, who besides his natural pollution, is stained with innumerable practical sins, only receives that blood and righteousness applied to us. The distinction between the working of the divine Spirit, and the effects of that working, one of which is faith, is complete. So that even if it were possible to prove—which it is not—that faith is impossible in infants,—it would be necessary, in addition, to prove that no spiritual benefit is possible without faith is already in exercise. But this is two ways absurd : because faith is itself the gift of God—and if it be the first gift, then a spiritual gift, even faith, may be given where no faith was before : and because, in fact, faith is itself the very proof that the greatest of all spiritual benefits—namely the new birth, of which faith is a manifestation—had been bestowed before faith could exist. In a psychological sense, justifying faith expresses that state of a soul already renewed by the Holy Ghost, in which its acceptance of the righteousness of Christ imputed to it by God, is manifested. Therefore, it far exceeds the warrant of the Church to deny to the resources of God's infinite power and his abounding grace, the possibility of the production of such states of soul in the children of believers ;—far exceeds her authority, on the ground of that alleged impossibility, to deny to them rights which God has bestowed on them ever since the Church herself had a visible existence. She dare not deny the reality of original sin, and the need of a Saviour, in the infant seed of believers : on the other hand she dare not deny the possibility of their salvation through Christ, and assert the universal perdition of all that die in childhood. To do either is to deny the faith. She is obliged, therefore, to baptize her children.

(*k*) *The Nature of the very Cavils against it.* No one, I believe, has ever pretended that there is any distinct command of God forbidding the infant seed of believers to be baptized. The ground of refusal to baptize them is only inferential. At first,

the existence of sin in infants was denied—and their baptism refused on that ground. Then it was taught that sins committed after baptism are peculiarly unlikely to be pardoned; and the inference followed that baptism should be deferred to a late period of life. Afterwards, in the lapse of centuries, it was taught that none dying in infancy can be saved at all; whereupon, as such teachers judged, none should receive in infancy the sign and seal of salvation. After further centuries, the Anabaptists, about the period of the Reformation, taught that faith in the person baptized is an indispensable condition in the valid administration of baptism—that infant children can neither exercise nor manifest faith—and therefore they cannot be baptized. These are the chief forms of this error; in each case grounded, as I have said, not on any command of God,—but always on an inference from some other dogma, itself in each case either wholly erroneous, or only partially correct; thus flagrantly violating the divine rule, that our faith ought to stand in the power of God, and not in the wisdom of men. But as to the great fundamental point, if there is no precise warrant from God to deny membership in his Church to such as he has, by an exact command made members of it, then the question is settled: for no authority but that of God, least of all an erroneous human inference—is competent to annul the plain and repeated commandments of God. As to the notion that infants have no sin, and the other that sins after baptism are well-nigh unpardonable; the former is a heresy held by no orthodox Christian, and the latter a superstition long ago extinct as a form of human opinion. The same remark is true of the atrocious heresy which taught the universal perdition of all who die in infancy; a fearful madness long ago extinct. Nevertheless, they who hold the two propositions that salvation is impossible without personal faith in Christ, and that no infant can exercise such faith; can escape the inexorable conclusion that all dead infants are damned, only by some inconsequence of logic—or by some heresy. The doctrine now held by all Christian people who reject infant baptism, I suppose, is substantially that taught by the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century. Concerning which it is to be observed, that admitting the general principle that faith in Christ is indispensable to baptism, the inference from this which leads to the denial of infant baptism, proceeds upon a threefold fallacy. It is a fallacy to suppose

that the faith required in the baptism of infants, must be their own personal faith. The Scriptures distinctly teach the contrary ; and give them the seal of the righteousness of faith, expressly because they are the seed of believers—as I have abundantly proved. If the doctrine of imputed righteousness is denied—then faith itself is forever impossible ; for in that case no sinner was ever regenerated. If the doctrine of the righteousness of faith is denied, then the salvation of sinners is forever impossible; for in that case we are still under the law and Christ can profit us nothing. Moreover, it is a fallacy to suppose, that this personal faith, even if it were invariably presumed in every baptism—must exist at the time of baptism, in order to make the act lawful. On the contrary, the efficacy of baptism, and the great blessings it signifies and seals, chiefly our ingrafting into Christ and our inward purification through the Holy Ghost ; so far from being bound to the moment of administration—extend—for their manifestation—over the whole of our life on earth. And it is from considerations connected with this great truth, that the great peculiarity of the administration of this sacrament but a single time, arises. This is inevitable if the efficacy of baptism depends on the blessing of God, and the work of the Spirit. If that efficacy depends on its own force, or the will of him who administers, or of him who receives it ; it ceases to be a sacrament and becomes an incantation. Finally, it is a fallacy to suppose that we can know with certainty, at what age, if at any, the soul is incapable of faith ; or to suppose that we can know with certainty, what is the state of another person's soul at the period of his baptism, or at any other period. Such knowledge, unto certainty, is not attainable by man on either point, in any single instance : and to demand it is to put an end to the administration of this sacrament. A credible profession of faith and repentance, is the scriptural condition of adult baptism : being the seed of believing parents, is the scriptural condition of infant baptism. Therefore, the Church of Christ, so far from being authorized to make a breach so immense, upon the order of God's house, and the method of his grace, and the rights of his children, and the principles which illustrate his divine Attributes and his sublime relations to the universe; has nothing even in the shape of human reasons, and motives, and wisdom, suggested to her as the ground of so great an outrage, that rises higher

than an appeal to her ignorance, to her caprice, or to her fanaticism.

4. There is reason to doubt whether there are now on earth as many persons who even profess to follow Christ, as there are persons living who are the offspring, immediate or remote, of true believers: and probably the whole number of those saved, as yet, out of the human race, may not exceed the whole number of those who were naturally, so to speak, the children of the Church. In what position does it present the visible Church, through all generations, that even a doubt can arise, whether, speaking after the manner of men, God has lost more of the lambs of his flock through her negligence, or gained more from the lost fold of the world by her diligence? The neglect of the proper nurture of the seed of God's people, is to be ranked amongst the most deplorable evils—nay amongst heinous sins. It need not be urged how great is the certainty of increasing this evil and encouraging this sin, by diminishing the sense of responsibility both on the part of the Church and of Christian parents; after we have apparently cast out their seed from all covenanted mercies, and allowed them to suppose that God holds them to no special accountability concerning their salvation. Moreover, it is a fatality attending all errors that they never come singly; the rejection of one truth involving the perversion of others, and the neglect of one duty drawing after it the denial of others. It is impossible to estimate the greatness of the desolation which would be produced, by the universal exclusion of the children of God's people from all participation in that Sacrament, whereby they are sealed as in covenant with God. On the other hand, it is impossible to estimate the extent of the good which has resulted from the recognition, by the visible Church, of the covenant relation of the seed of believers to God through Jesus Christ; notwithstanding the unfaithfulness, both of parents and of the Church, may have been as great in this as in all other respects. As an illustration of the immense subject, it may be asserted with confidence, that common mendicity and total illiteracy are banished from every Christian communion in which parents, at the baptism of their children, are required, by a sacramental engagement, to rear their offspring in the fear and nurture of God, and to teach them to read his holy word; while it is from the bosom of such communions

that the most steadfast resistance to heresy, to superstition, and to fanaticism, invariably arises. So true is it that godliness hath promise both of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

III.—1. It is true of all things—pre-eminently true of spiritual things—that it is the Spirit which giveth life, while the mere letter killeth.[1] To determine concerning a series of acts professing to be identical, that one is perfect, that one is valid, that one is irregular, and that one is void ; involves the recognition of the universal principle I have stated—and involves at every decision an attempt to apply it. It is, therefore, with good reason, that the Reformed Church in particular, and, to a certain extent most other Churches, have held, that baptism though irregular may be valid ; that it is not necessarily void because it is irregular. It may be wholly void, it may be perfect, it may be very nearly perfect, or may be very irregular ; and yet, in the last two cases, the substance of the Sacrament may be preserved, and the act be good. If a certain Church thinks itself authorized to add to the Scriptural form of baptism, the exorcism of the Devil—and another to add the sign of the cross—and another to add sponsors,—or if some, going still further, change in some degree, more or less serious, the particulars divinely prescribed—as for example to immerse the subject in water, instead of applying the element to him ; it may nevertheless be true, that such additions and changes may not so vitiate the ordinance as to oblige those who condemn them, to reject the administration of the Sacrament in that manner, as merely void. The administration may be so vitiated, no doubt, as to make it necessary to reject it wholly, as void ; and this may become necessary on various other grounds—as for example, the total apostacy, or even the gross heresy of the communion whose members administer the ordinance. But the errors of a true Christian Church which do not destroy the substance and nature of the Sacrament, cannot justify other Christian Churches in rejecting its ordinances, and thus making schism in the body of Christ, on the ground of mere irregularity, even though it be serious. This is the common doctrine of the Church of God, in all ages, and with relation to every ordinance which he ever gave to that Church. Nor has the departure from it by those who act

[1] 2 Cor., iii. 6.

as if immersion was the only valid form of Christian baptism, saved them from the fate of all who commit similar breaches upon the faith of the Church, and the unity of the Spirit. For by making immersion the great test of Christian communion, so far are they from establishing any unity even amongst themselves, that some have insisted on immersion only, whilst some have added sprinkling or pouring to it: some have allowed only a single, while others have adopted a trine immersion: some have immersed the subject backwards, some forwards: some have allowed the subject to be immersed in ordinary apparel: some have allowed or required a peculiar apparel: and for several successive ages in the early Church, their practice was to strip the subject naked before immersing him. Revolting as this last perversion of a divine ordinance may now appear to be; it is well to remember that the analogies on which it was defended had, apparently, as much force as any upon which the exclusive validity of immersion is now almost universally vindicated by Baptists as a type of the burial of Christ. For the ancient immersionists insisted truly, that Christians were required to put off the old man, that rich men can hardly enter the Kingdom of God, that all men had forfeited everything by the fall of Adam, that Christ had laid aside even his glory for us, and to crown all, that we entered this world naked; and as the common conclusion from many such truths—baptism in total nakedness was the superstition to which the fanaticism led, that made an erroneous form in the use of an element, the badge of Christianity itself. Nor has this ancient and wide-spread schism upon a point so narrow, secured unity in the most important parts of truth and godliness, better than in the mere form which, first misunderstanding, they so unduly exalted. For amongst such immersionists as are recognized as true disciples of Christ, some have followed Augustine and Calvin, some have inclined to Arminius, some are almost Antinomians—and many profess doctrines curiously taken from several systems; while Arians, Sabellians, Socinians, Pelagians, Universalists, and even Mormons have been, to a great extent, believers in the exclusive validity of baptism by immersion. If it be replied, that as touching these last-named divisions, their misfortunes are no way different from those of Churches which baptize by affusion, while they admit baptism by immersion to be valid, though it be ir-

regular ; the obvious answer is, that such Churches never supposed or asserted that their mode of baptism was the great test of fidelity to truth and to Christ ; never made schism on account of it ; never limited the visible Church of Christ, and the fellowship of the Gospel, by their method of using water in the Sacrament of baptism. We are, therefore, not at all disappointed that it has failed to keep us pure and united, well knowing that a mere form even if right and divine, has no such efficacy ; and deeply regretting that our brethren amongst immersionists cannot see in the same light, the total failure of that irregular and erroneous form of whose importance they have such exaggerated ideas.

2. I have proved there were but two permanent Sacraments in the visible Church, from Abraham to Christ ; that there are but two in the Gospel Church, namely, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The relation of each of these sacraments to the Godhead, to us, and to salvation, is extremely clear. In particular they signify and seal to us the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and all the benefits we receive from him ; and are, therefore, outward signs of all inward graces of the Spirit of God. By one of them, the benefits of Christ, considered as purchased for us by his sacrifice,—by the other those benefits considered as applied to us by his Spirit, become ours sacramentally. One of them seals our ingrafting into him, as lost sinners regenerated and purified by the Holy Ghost, sent by him from the Father ; the other seals our nourishment and growth by his body and blood, received through faith, as penitent and believing sinners, for whom he died and rose again. All this, it seems to me, is clear even to a very weak spiritual discernment. How the atoning sacrifice of Christ in our room and stead should be the foundation of everything ; and how the work of the divine Spirit within us should be the consummation of all, I think I see clearly. And how both the former and the latter should secure for, and produce in every child of God, grace responsive to both, in his spiritual union and communion with Christ, and in his spiritual purification by the Holy Ghost, seems to me very plain. And then, how the two Sacraments should relate, on the one hand, to these inward and spiritual graces, in us, and on the other, to the divine Saviour and the divine Spirit who redeem and purify us ; as well as implicitly, to the eternal Father, and

the eternal covenant which provides all, appears to be obvious. And all this, as I have shown, is plainly taught by the word of God. But in what manner the *burial* of the dead human body of Jesus temporarily in a sepulchre hewn in stone—can be made the ground of a Sacrament, which, by means of water baptism, shall be a sign of any inward grace in the soul, and shall seal any promise made by God to penitent sinners ; this, I confess, I do not understand, and cannot conceive. And I am thoroughly convinced that no doctrine, no fact, taught in the word of God, justifies us in saying that the burial of Jesus is the subject of any sacrament ; much less, that the sacrament of baptism has, for any part of its object, the representation of that burial. There is a twofold perversion of the sacred mysteries, resulting primarily from a perversion of the mode of administering baptism. The Sacrament of the Supper signifies and seals the broken body and shed blood of Christ, according to his own express declaration. If baptism, the only remaining Sacrament, is converted into a commemoration of the burial of Christ, then no sacrament remains to the Church, which teaches, signifies or seals any part of the work of the Spirit of God—none which teaches, signifies, or seals, our ingrafting into Christ—without all of which no sinner can be saved, and all of which is taught, signified, and sealed in Christian baptism. And a new sacrament, unknown to the Scriptures, and destitute of every scriptural mark of a sacrament, is created for God, by man, based upon the temporary placing of the dead body of Jesus in a stone sepulchre, and held forth in a supposed representation thereof by immersing a person in water. Those who thus act might have some reason for what they do, if their design was to discredit the entire doctrine of the Holy Ghost, and of the life of God in the soul of man ; which assuredly is not the purpose of any Christian immersionists. In effect, the aspect given to the whole subject, by the modern state of opinion amongst Baptists generally, so far from affording any support to the idea that they who immerse, are exclusively possessed of the sacrament of baptism ; creates a serious and increasing difficulty on the part of other Christians, in recognizing the validity of the ordinance, even when administered by evangelical Baptists. Not, as I have already shown, because of the inherent irregularity of immersion itself ; but because of the fundamental perversion of the true

Sacrament, and the sacramental nullity of what is substituted for it.

3. I am aware that such Scriptures as Rom., vi. 4, and Col., ii. 12, are habitually relied on to prove, that baptism is a special commemoration of the burial of Jesus, and that, therefore, immersion is the exclusive mode of its administration. I repeat what I have already intimated, that even if the former part of the statement were true, it affords no support to the latter part of it. For the immersion of a living person in water, whether forward or backward, whether once or three times, whether clothed or naked ; does not represent the fact of burial, nor any mode of burial ever used among men, nor the particular burial of Jesus in the sepulchre of Joseph of Arimathea. So that even if those Scriptures alluded to, or any others, prove that the sacrament of baptism was a special commemoration of the burial of Jesus ; it would be as far as ever from being proved that immersion in water was a proper, much less the exclusive way of administering that sacrament. But the true sense of the Scriptures relied on to prove that baptism is a commemoration of the burial of Jesus, is far different from that which they attempt to torture from them. Know ye not, says the Apostle Paul, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death ? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism unto death : that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.[1] It is three times stated in the passage, that it is the *death*—not the burial of Christ—which is to be commemorated by us ; we are baptized into his death—it is baptism into death—we are baptized into the likeness of his death. This is the fundamental point : our baptism signifies our ingrafting into our crucified Saviour. It is not into water, nor into the grave that baptism is declared to point, or that we are declared to come through it ; but is into Christ, and into his death ; and so baptism is called baptism into death. And the assurance that we shall live with Christ, is derived, as this Apostle declares in the text, from the certainty that we are dead with him who died for us while we were yet sinners ; and by whose death we are reconciled

[1] Rom., vi. 3–5.

to God.[1] As to immersion being a representation of our resurrection, and therefore the exclusive mode of celebrating baptism: that is as futile as the other. Because it is expressly said in this Scripture, that such as are, by baptism into Christ and into death, buried with Christ, ought to walk in newness of life: not that they ought to come up out of the water—nor that coming up out of the water, is a representation either of Christ's resurrection, or of our own. Being buried with Christ by means of baptism into death, neither signifies our natural death, nor our natural burial, nor the mode of baptism, nor that baptism represents the burial and resurrection of Christ. But what it means is, that by baptism into Christ, and into his death—we signify our death unto sin, and our subsequent newness of life, our ingrafting into Christ, our being planted into the likeness of his death and so buried with him, and by consequence our being planted in the likeness of his resurrection. The benefits of his death and resurrection—are thus signified and sealed to us. And the passage runs thus: They who are baptized into Jesus Christ, are baptized into his death; their burial with him, through that baptismal death, is to the end that even as Christ was raised from the dead, so they should live a new life: because they are planted in the likeness both of his death and resurrection. Which is the common doctrine of the Church of God: and in the very words. To the same purport is the only remaining passage of the New Testament Scriptures, in which the burial of Christ is so mentioned as to be liable to the perversion I am considering. For in him, says the same Apostle who wrote the other passage, dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried into him in baptism,* wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.[2] That is, we must have fellowship with the death of Christ, if we would have fellowship

[1] Rom., v. 8–10; vi. 8.

* *Συνταφέντες αυτω εν τῷ βαπτίσματι ἐν ᾧ*, &c. In the passage in Romans it is *συνεταφημεν ουν αυτῷ δια του βαπτισματος*, &c.; the Greek, as well as the sense, in both passages, making the Baptism—not a burial nor a similitude of one—but a *means unto* our mystical joint burial with Christ.

[2] Col., ii. 9–12.

with his resurrection ; since we must be ingrafted into him, if we would live with him ; and it is shown how that ingrafting and that fellowship are signified and sealed in our baptism. For by it our death to sin and our resurrection to righteousness, are sealed in Christ ; and the burial which attends one, and the newness of life which attends the other, are both not only in but with Christ : and therefore both are through baptism. Which is precisely equivalent to saying, that baptism seals our ingrafting into Christ, and our purification by the Spirit. The Apostle does not say that our baptism is our burial, or that it is the similitude of a burial, or a resurrection. But he says it is a means whereby our burial and that of Christ become a joint burial, and whereby our resurrection and that of Christ also became joint. It is such a means, he says, through faith,—which is the work of God who raised Christ from the dead ; and our completeness in him, thus signified in baptism—was equally signified in circumcision. Now our baptism being, indubitably, neither Christ's burial nor our own, it can be truly said that by means of it we have a joint burial with Christ, only in a mystical sense : which is exactly what is said. In a real, but in a spiritual sense—that is mystically—sacramentally—the people of God have a joint death, burial, and resurrection with the Saviour : and baptism signifies, and seals all three. But it seals neither of them by immersing a person in water, as a representation of the fact and manner of Christ's burial and resurrection : but it seals them all by the application of water to the person, as a sign of the purification wrought in us by the Holy Ghost, who was purchased by the death of the Saviour who redeemed us with his blood, and sent from heaven as the Comforter of his people—the crowning proof of his glorification.

4. I have, said the blessed Lord, a baptism to be baptized with ; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished ![1] Had that baptism a solitary point, identical with any one in ordinary Christian baptism ? And yet how many have incurred, and do still incur, that baptism of anguish, with Christ, and for Christ ?[2] Again, we have the word used in a comparatively low spiritual sense, to signify so much of the things of the Lord as was taught by John the Baptist : and that even after Christian baptism had

[1] Luke, xii. 50 ; Matt., xx. 22, 23 ; Mark, x. 38, 39.

[2] Rom., viii. 17, 18, 37 ; 2 Cor, i. 3–7.

spread over the Roman empire.[1] Again, we have the word applied in an exclusive and strict sense by the Apostle Peter, who of all men ought to have known what Christian baptism was; to signify the outward ordinance, calling it a figure, an antitype of the Ark in which Noah was saved.[2] And again, it goes so high as to become a baptism with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.[3] Four senses of the word baptism, each of them scriptural, and most distinct; and yet neither of them the sense intended by Christ when he instituted the sacrament of baptism, and commanded his Apostles to teach all nations, and to baptize his followers in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.[4] And if there were a thousand scriptural senses, and a thousand more heathen senses, in which the word had been used, should that prevent the Lord Jesus from using it in a specific sense, for a special purpose? What if some hundreds of its other senses did better accord, in the judgment of many thousands of men, learned and unlearned, with the original meaning which they suppose the word had, or should have had, than the sense the Lord gave to it did; should that oblige the Lord to mean what he did not mean? Nay if countless men, who judge themselves to be learned, are sure that one special sense is the true, original sense of a term afterwards used in many senses; should that oblige us to torture language, human and divine, until we extort, no matter at what cost of reason and faith, the meaning which satisfies this multitude? For my own part, I admit the right of the divine Redeemer to establish what ordinances he pleased; to give them what names he thought proper; and to attach to the terms he used, the sense he considered most appropriate. Thus accepted, the Scriptures do unquestionably teach, as I think I have proved, and as the true followers of Christ have commonly and always believed, that what the Lord meant by baptism was a divine mystery, administered by his Apostles, and to be administered to all his disciples to the end of the world, by duly authorized stewards of his mysteries; that the element used in this divine ordinance, was water; that the administration of it was directed by the Saviour to be in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and that it was designed to be, and has continued according to the promise of Christ to

[1] Acts, xviii. 24–26; xix. 1–7.
[2] 1 Peter, iii. 20, 21.
[3] Matt., iii. 11; Luke, iii. 16
[4] Matt., xxviii. 18, 19.

the present time, one of the two sacraments of the Gospel Church. So far, there is probably no dispute amongst evangelical Christians. I add, that this sacrament was designed and understood by his Apostles, to be administered to the infant seed of believers, as I have endeavoured to prove : that it was designed by Christ and understood by his Apostles, to be administered by the application of water to the subject, that is by affusion, or the pouring or sprinkling of the water upon the subject, and not by immersing him in the water ; as I will attempt to prove.

5. In considering the intention of the Lord, as to the mode in which water should be used in the administration of this sacrament, which intention if it can be ascertained is conclusive on all who believe in him ; some of the grounds upon which we are now able to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion, may be very briefly stated, somewhat after the following manner.

(*a*) *Nature of the Grace, of the Seal, of their Relation to each other, and all to Christ.* It is, as I have proved, the doctrine of the word of God and of the Church of Christ, that the fundamental idea of a sacrament is, that it is an outward and visible sign of inward and invisable grace ; and that the great inward grace signified in baptism, by the sacramental use of water, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is the purification of the soul by the blood of Christ, through the work of the Spirit. Now the whole of this is from God to us : done to us from above, not done by us. It is the grace of God, the blood of Christ, the work of the Spirit, applied to us. The water which signifies it all, and signifies by its purifying virtue the effect of all, and that by the institution of Christ, should also be applied to us. Which is confirmed by the declaration that we are elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ :[1] and the further declaration that the pouring out of the Spirit of God, is the characteristic work of the only dispensation in which water is a sacramental element.[2] It is the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, it is the outpouring of the Spirit of God on us, it is the efficacy of these which produces the inward grace, which the water signifies. Unless we are expressly told the contrary, how are we to

[1] 1 Peter, i. 2 ; Heb., xii. 24.

[2] Joel, ii. 28, 29 ; Acts, ii. 17, 18.

avoid the conclusion that the water, also, must be poured or sprinkled on us?

(*b*) *Relation of Sprinkling Blood and Water, always, to purification and to Christ.* The use of both water and of blood in the sacred mysteries of the Church of God, was habitual and constant under the institutions of Moses from their origin. But that ancient form of the Church, was simply a dispensation of the Messianic Kingdom, of which the Saviour of the world was the head and Lord: and everything in it was his, and pointed continually to him. Moreover he was a Jew, and his ministry was passed as a minister of the circumcision; and his Apostles were all Jews; and his whole life was passed in scrupulous and perfect observance of the entire righteousness that was by the law. Now when the covenant between God and his people was ratified after the giving of the law at Sinai; Moses by the command of God, sprinkled half the blood of the sacrifices offered to God upon the altar, and the rest of the blood he sprinkled upon the people, saying, Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you.[1] The Apostle Paul in allusion to this, and in the transcendent exaltation of the Christian above the Jewish dispensation, says, We are come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.[2] It was a perpetual statute, that all who were ceremonially unclean by any contact with the dead, should have the water of separation applied to them, as a purification from sin: which was done by sprinkling the water upon the person:[3] and upon the great day of Atonement, once every year, the high priest sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice even upon the mercy seat, which covered the ark:[4] both of which with other ordinances, the Apostle Paul recounts in illustrating what the Lord Jesus had done, and adds, How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God?[5] Let me add the remarkable declaration of Paul, that all Israel that went up out of Egypt were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea:[6] and that of Isaiah, in one of his most illustrious prophecies of Christ, So shall he sprinkle many nations:[7] and that of Ezekiel, when expressly

[1] Ex., xxiv. 6–8. [2] Heb., xii. 24. [3] Numb., xix. *passim*. [4] Lev., xvi. 14.
[5] Heb., ix. *passim*. [6] 1 Cor., x. 2. [7] Isa., lii. 15.

foretelling that blessed time, when God would give his people a new heart, and put a new spirit within them, Then I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean.[1] Let these examples suffice, to illustrate the mode in which blood and water were used by the authority of Christ himself, in the sacred mysteries of the ancient Church ; the form in which these ideas lay in the mind of every child of God on earth, when Christ instituted the sacrament of baptism with water, as the sign of the sprinkling of his purifying blood—the form in which they could not but lay in the mind of the Jewish people on the day of Pentecost when the first Christian baptism was administered to three thousand Jews. In the absence of any explicit statement that he meant something else, how can we doubt that he intended the water in baptism to signify a purification, and to be sprinkled or poured on the subject ?

(c) *Sense, original and actual, of the Words personally used by Christ.* The language of the New Testament is a somewhat peculiar dialect of the Greek : though that is not the language which Christ spoke, and in which he taught. We have those sacred writings in that tongue, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost: and accept them as they are, as infallible truth concerning what our Saviour said, and did, and meant. It is extremely easy for those whose minde are already made up that a particular mode of baptism is exclusively valid ; to make positive assertions concerning the original meaning and only proper use and significancy of words in this peculiar language and in classic Greek ; neither of which the bulk of mankind know anything of, and which very few persons understand thoroughly. I cannot, of course, enter at large into discussions bearing on that aspect of the subject, in such a Treatise as this. What is proper here, on such a point, with reference to such a subject, is to state my own convictions, and support them as briefly as possible. The wonder is that it should ever have been supposed, that we are competent to determine either the laws of thought or of speech in such a manner ; as by them to fix an absolute and invariable sense beforehand, to which the utterance of the Creator, both of thought and speech, shall be limited. The utmost to which we are competent, is some just knowledge of the subject and the language, and then the careful consideration of

[1] Ezekiel, xxxvi. 25.

what God has actually said and done. The sacred use of water in connection with their religious rites, which I have alluded to in the case of the Hebrews, is known to have been common to all ancient nations—the Egyptians, the inhabitants of Judea, the Persians, the early Romans, as well as the Greeks. If it were positively certain that the mode of this sacred use, especially among the Greeks, was exclusively by immersing the person in water; it would prove nothing with regard to the intention of Christ as to the sacred use of water by him in the Christian Church: not even if he should adopt the very words they had previously used in their mysteries. This obvious truth is illustrated in the frequency with which words in common use by Greek authors, are employed in the New Testament in a sense materially, sometimes wholly different from the classical sense, in order to express ideas peculiar to the Church, and to salvation. And surely, in the whole system of Jesus, nothing is more peculiar than the idea of the union of the soul with him, through the virtue of his shed blood, applied to us in the work of a divine agent. I deny, however, that there was anything in the original signification, or the previous use whether common or sacred, of the word employed to express the intention of Jesus in the institution of this sacrament,* to authorize the inference that he meant the subject of it to be immersed in water. On the contrary the original sense of the term (*βαπτω*) from which all the rest are derived, was, when applied to things common, that their state was changed by changing the surface—and when applied to things sacred, that their state was changed by purifying them; which, in effect, accords with the idea of baptism, by which the state of man, both external and internal, is signified as being changed; changed outwardly by his becoming a covenanted follower of Christ, and inwardly by his being born of the Spirit. In the common use of the terms, they signify any change of colour by dyeing garments, or anything else, even the hair; the glazing of pottery; the painting, varnishing and gilding of pillars, statues, or anything else; the cleansing of household vessels and furniture by the use of water, and the like; some of which uses can be easily proved by citations from the New Testament, and all of them, and many more to the same purport, are common in the Greek classics. The use of the

* *Βαπτιζοντες—βαπτιζω—βαπτω.*

words attributed to Christ by the sacred writers, is remarkable. He told Nicodemus, early in his ministry, that in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, a man must be born of water and of the Spirit ;[1] but it was not until after his resurrection that he explained this use of water to be baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ;[2] nor till then that he explained the great difference between John's baptism, and his own.[3] In one of his parables he put the word *βαψη* into the mouth of a man in hell ; Send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water ;[4] and as he celebrated the last Supper, he used it again in the same sense.* He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish : one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish : he it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it ; it is thus our translators have rendered the places.[5] He used the word again, when he spake of his own cup and baptism ;† alluding doubtless to his agony in the garden of Gethsemane and on the Cross ; to the whole, it may be, that befell him, from the last Supper till his resurrection.[6] Once he applied the word *βαπτισμα* to the baptism of John, demanding of those who questioned his own authority, whence that baptism was.[7] These are the chief instances, if not the whole, in which it is known that Jesus personally used these words, either before or after his resurrection. He applied them once to the baptism of John, once to the wetting of the tip of the finger, once to a piece of food put in a dish, and to the putting of a man's hand in a dish for food, twice to his own approaching agony ; and after his resurrection, he used them once in instituting the sacrament, once in exhibiting its relation to salvation, and once in pointing out the difference between John's baptism with water, and the immediately approaching baptism of the Holy Ghost, which John had so distinctly taught was peculiar to Christ, and out of all comparison superior to his own. Upon this state of case, presented in this paragraph, and remembering what was shown before, what pretext is there for asserting that the teaching of Jesus establishes immersion as a way, much less the exclusive way of Christian baptism ?

[1] John, iii. 5. [2] Mat., xxviii. 19 ; Mark, xvi 16. [3] Acts, i. 5 ; xi. 16. [4] Luke, xvi. 24.

* *Εμβαψας—εμβαπτομενος—βαψας.* [5] Mat., xxvi. 23 ; Mark, xiv. 20; John, xiii. 26.

† *Βαπτισμα—βαπτισθηναι—βαπτιζομαι—βαπτισθησεσθε.*

[6] Mat., xx. 21, 22 ; Mark, x. 38, 39 ; Luke, xii. 49, 50 ; xxi. 25

[7] Mark, xi. 30 ; Luke, xx. 4.

(*d*) *Sense of Christ's special Explanation.* In connection with his command to await the outpouring of the Spirit, Christ said to his Apostles, For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.[1] Peter says that when the Holy Ghost fell on the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius, he remembered the words of the Lord, which he repeats; and they led him to baptize those first Gentile Christians.[2] Thus remarkably did Christ fulfil the promise he had made, that the Comforter should teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance.[3] Thus remarkably did he make Peter the honoured instrument of opening the Church of God, once more, to the nations so long rejected; according to his promise to him, when Peter made that great confession of him.[4] And thus completely did this explanation by Christ, of the baptism he had instituted, control its administration, as we shall afterwards see, both to the Jews and Gentiles. What I insist on here is, that those decisive words of Christ, oblige us to understand that his baptism was to be administered *with* water, and not *in*—much less *into* water; that the water was to be applied to the person—not that the person was to be immersed in the water. The Greek words are the same, in both the passages already cited from the Acts of the Apostles.* The language in the English is also very nearly the same in both passages, and exactly expresses the sense; baptized with water—baptized with the Holy Ghost: a form of expression, and of contrast, common in the New Testament. But the Greek form of expression in the words used by Christ, is not the same in both branches of the statement. When he says John baptized with water, he puts the noun (*υδατι*) in the dative case, after the verb, and omits the preposition (*εν*): and when he says they should be baptized with the Holy Ghost, he uses the preposition before the dative case (*εν πνευματι ἁγιω*). In the former case it is John, and the person baptized, and the means, the element, *with* which as the case used shows: in the latter case it is Christ, and the person baptized and the divine Agent *with* whose concurrence, as the case used shows. It is noteworthy that the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, when repeating the words of John the Baptist,

[1] Acts, i. 5.
[2] Acts, xi. 16.
[3] John, xiv. 26.
[4] Matt., xvi. 16–19.

* Ὅτι Ἰωαννης μεν εβαπτιεν ὑδατι, ὑμεις δε βαπτισθησεσθε ἐν πνευματι ἁγιῳ.

expresses the same sense as to the water, by changing the phrase a little ; putting the noun (*υδατι*) before the verb, in the dative, and without the preposition ; at the same time preserving the exact form in what related to Christ. Matthew and Mark repeating the words of John the Baptist, use the preposition before both nouns, in the dative case, after the verb :[1] while John once conforms to that usage, and once uses the noun before the verb, prefixing both the preposition and the article.[2] These are the various forms in which the statements concerning the relation of John's baptism and that of Christ to each other, are given in the words of both of them, by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The unquestionable sense of all the statements seems to me to be, first, that we must be baptized *with* water, and not *into* water ; and, secondly, even if *with* water were proved to mean *in* water in the sense of completely wetting the person, it would be as remote as ever from immersion, that is, *into* the water. Such modes of expression as I have pointed out, oblige us to understand that the water, and the blood, and the Spirit are applied to us : and I suppose it to be impossible to find, or to construct, a Greek sentence analogous to these remarkable passages, which could, without violence, be understood otherwise. If this be so, the very words used by Christ, after his resurrection, to his Apostles, in exposition both of John's baptism and of that which he had instituted, oblige us to see that Christian baptism is to be administered, not by immersion, but by sprinkling or pouring water on the subject.

(*e*) *Sense attributed to these Words by the Apostles of the Lord.* The sense intended by Christ to be affixed to the terms he used in instituting the Sacrament of baptism ; is precisely determined by the use made of them by his Apostles, who received the command from him, and executed it with plenary authority and inspiration. Their account of the matter is to the following purport : Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it : that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing ; but that it should be holy and without blemish.[3] Here is the love and the sacrifice of Christ—the power of the divine word—the power and effects of the divine Spirit—the product of all, the glo-

[1] Matt., iii. 11; Mark, i. 8. [2] John, i. 26–33. [3] Eph., v. 25–27.

rious Church ; but in the midst of these, is the cleansing of the Church with the washing of water.* Baptism, therefore, represents the powerful washing of the blood and Spirit of Christ, by which we have access, by a new and living way to the holiest of all ; to which, says the Apostle, Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.[1] How then is it possible for the heart to be purified, by having it sprinkled ? Paul tells us it is by sprinkling it with the blood of Christ, that the conscience is purged from dead works.[2] And as to sprinkling the blood of Christ on the heart, Peter tells us that this sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, is through sanctification of the Spirit :[3] and to clear the matter still further, he adds that by the washing of our bodies with pure water in baptism, he does not understand the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God.[4] For it is not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to the mercy of God our Saviour, that he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost ; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.[5] But what Paul had called the washing of water in the Epistle to the Ephesians, he calls here the washing of regeneration.† Baptism, therefore, is the seal of our ingrafting into Christ, and into his body which is the Church ; a seal, also, of our purification by the work of the Holy Ghost ; and the washing with water in it, is not to cleanse the filthiness of the flesh, but signifies the work of the Spirit in the conscience,—and is after the manner of the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, upon our hearts. Christ said to Nicodemus, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God ;[6] and the declaration of Paul is precise, that God saves us, according to his mercy, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.[7] According to the word of God, the blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God cleanseth us from all sin ;[8] even that Jesus who came not by water only, but by water and blood, as the spirit of truth beareth witness.[9] And so it is.

* Καθαρισας τῳ λουτρῳ του υδατος.
† Δια λουτρου παλιγγενεσιας.

[1] Heb., x. 22.
[2] Heb., ix. 13, 14.
[3] 1 Peter, i. 2.
[4] 1 Peter, iii. 21.
[5] Titus, iii. 4–6.
[6] John, iii. 5.
[7] Titus, iii. 4, 5.
[8] 1 John, i. 7.
[9] 1 John, v. 6.

declared, Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.[1] Now, that this sacred mystery, this baptism, this washing, this sprinkling,* was the sacramental application of water to the person of him who received the ordinance; thereby signifying and sealing his ingrafting into Christ, and his purification by the Holy Ghost; is as undeniably certain, as it is that the Greek tongue is capable of expressing these ideas. As to any teaching of the divine Scriptures, that this sacrament is a burial, or an immersion; that it is an exorcism, or a charm, or that it has any inherent efficacy, or that it is to be accompanied with any ceremonies beyond those necessary in the solemn application of the water to the person: nothing of that sort is to be found in the word of God; but a great deal irreconcilable with it all. As to any pretended inconsistency between the obvious sense conveyed by the language of the sacred writers, and the alleged original, and only proper sense of the terms they used; it appears to me that those men, speaking Greek by immediate inspiration of God, instructed in what they taught immediately by Christ, and full of the Holy Ghost; very probably knew what they professed to teach. And that they were both honest and in earnest, is rather clearly proved by their having sealed their testimony with their blood.

IV.—1. It remains to examine, as carefully as my limits will allow, the Apostolic practice with regard to the administration of this sacrament. The first instance of it that occurred, was altogether the most wonderful and pregnant; and the divine statement of the actual event corresponds, in simplicity and brevity, with those concerning the institution and the exposition of the sacrament by Christ. Then they that gladly received the word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.[2] This record was made many years after the event, and by a man who may not have been present on the occasion: but the Acts of the Apostles as an inspired book is invested with such proofs of its divine origin, as to justify the title by which it was once known, namely, the Gospel of the Holy Ghost. Those long intervening years had been full of the most wonderful events. Luke, the writer of the book, in which the history of the planting of the Gospel Church, and of the first

[1] 1 Cor., vii. 7, 11.

[2] Acts, 11.

* Μυστηριον—βαπτισμα—λουτρον—ῥαντισμος.

period of the dispensation of the Spirit with power, has been preserved ; had already written his Gospel, in which the life and acts of Christ, from his birth to his taking up into heaven, are narrated ; and the doctrine and practice of that baptism, the first and grandest example of which is stated in the words I have quoted, had penetrated all civilized nations. Considering the solemn occasion on Pentecost from this point of view, and in this light; it would have been strange if the Evangelist had paused in his great narrative, to give a particular explanation of the mode of administering baptism. He recounts the miraculous outpouring of the Spirit, that promise of the Father so much insisted on by Christ ; the miraculous effects of this on the Apostles, and their immediate exercise of the gift of tongues ; the amazement of the vast, heterogeneous multitude gathered out of all nations at Jerusalem, and their hurrying together in confused wonder and trouble ; the mighty discourse of Peter, and its mighty effects ; three thousand souls accepting the words of eternal life—added to the company of the redeemed—baptized. If there is anything connected with such a scene as this, which throws incidental but clear light upon things less important than the main events ; we can hardly doubt that this light belongs to the nature of the case, and is to be confidently accepted by us. I think there is much, and will endeavour to disclose it.

2. (*a*) *The nature of the Events and the shortness of the time.* It was the third hour of the day ; about nine o'clock in the forenoon. The three thousand persons were baptized and were added to the Church of Christ, that same day.[1] The ninth hour of the day, about three o'clock in the afternoon, was the habitual hour of public prayer, at which the Apostles attended ; and this was a season of great solemnity.[2] The entire period occupied by these great occurrences, could not, therefore, have occupied more than six hours. Within that space must be crowded, all that was uttered by Peter—those other words, (as well as what is recorded) in which he testified and exhorted the multitude to save themselves from that untoward generation ; and all that was said by all the Apostles, before Peter commenced his discourse, to crowds of people from every nation under heaven, of whom fifteen nations are mentioned by name, to every man in

[1] Acts, ii. 15, 41.

[2] Acts, iii. 1; ii. 48.

his own tongue wherein he was born, concerning the things whereof the Spirit gave them utterance.[1] Moreover it was to be ascertained who they were who gladly received the word, and they were to be separated from the great impenitent multitude, and were to give such proofs of their faith as satisfied the Apostles, before they received them into their fellowship. And further still, whether we suppose these stupendous scenes to have occurred in the very temple itself, or in the general enclosure more largely called the temple,* or perhaps in one of the courts or porches of it ; in either case, whatever delay may have arisen from the special difficulties appertaining to the particular place, must be considered. To say nothing further, let the six hours allowed by the inspired narrative, suffer the deduction required by the foregoing circumstances ; and how are we to conceive it to be possible, that the portion of time remaining was sufficient to allow of the immersion of three thousand persons, even if, on the instant, and at the place, everything had been in readiness ? There are but three allowable solutions. They were immersed by the Apostles—which seems to be impossible. Or they were sprinkled in mass, according to the custom of the Jews, who on certain occasions appear to have purified in this manner, by the sprinkling of blood or water with a hyssop ;[2] which would not have been the baptism instituted by Christ, and is wholly unsupported by evidence. Or they were baptized by pouring or sprinkling water upon each one of them, sacramentally ; just as they would be now, according to the method still practised in the Church of Christ ; which was possible, under the circumstances. The conclusion then, supposing the mode of baptism to be disputed and doubtful, is apparently very strong against the immersion of these three thousand persons—and in favour of their baptism by the application of water to them.

(*b*) *The Nature of the Place, and the Circumstances.* Let it be borne in mind that the circumstances of this enquiry are inexorable. It is expressly stated that these people were converted on the day of Pentecost, and that they were baptized the same day : they were baptized with water : and there are but three modes by which this is possible, namely, putting them into water, or applying the water to them, or combining both in one

[1] Acts, ii. 5–13, 40. * Ναος—the temple itself; ἱερον—everything in the walled area.

[2] Ex., xii. 22 ; Lev., xiv. 51 ; Num., xix. 18 ; Heb., ix. 19.

ordinance. As to the third of these possible methods—it is not imaginary. It probably prevailed to a considerable extent in the early Church ; and in it, and in some of the oriental Churches, so far as trine immersion has ever prevailed, the water poured on the subject after the threefold immersion, was, in effect, the real baptism ; the immersions being purifications in the name of the Trinity, added without divine warrant, gradually accepted as part, and by some finally as the whole of the sacrament. In the Churches of the Latin Empire, in the Papal Church, and the Protestant Churches, this superstition, which only increases all the difficulties of the immersionists, never prevailed ; and need not be discussed here. Upon the circumstances stated, therefore, it follows, that whatever tends to establish either of the remaining two modes, tends in an equal degree to confute the other : and whatever subverts one establishes the other. This inexorable antagonism is the basis of all the practical difficulty created by the immersionists, and is the logical foundation of their argument, their conclusion, and their practice. It is better to accept the issue, and put an end to the question, if that be possible, than to content ourselves, as was formerly the case, with affirming the lawfulness of affusion as a mode of scriptural baptism. Admitting then that a mode is *the* mode, I urge that in addition to the physical impossibility arising out of the nature of the transaction, which I have explained in the preceding paragraph ; there is an additional and more obvious impossibility, arising out of the nature of the place where, and the circumstances under which, the transaction occurred. It is not possible that these three thousand persons could have been baptized by the Apostles, and the record is positive that they alone had anything to do with the matter ;[1] because there was no place about the temple where it could be done at all, in the sudden and hurried manner required ; and because if there had been such a place, they would not have been allowed to put it to any such use. If the events occurred in the temple itself, or within its general area, in one of its courts or porches ; then it is certain there was no possible way of immersing three thousand persons off hand, about the temple ; certain, also, that those having the control of the temple and its sacred pools, would not have allowed them to be used for any such purpose, even if they had existed, and

[1] Acts, ii. *passim.*

been sufficient, and in complete readiness ; certain, also, that the temper of the Jewish priests towards Christ whom they had caused to be crucified a little before, and towards Peter whom they caused to be arrested a little after, was the furthest possible from allowing to the Apostles, of all men in the world, indulgences forbidden by their law and their traditions, and which those priests could consider as nothing but a profane and ostentatious desecration of the temple. The narrative contains no intimation that any change of plan occurred, preparatory to the baptism ; but it proceeds exactly as if the three thousand persons were baptized forthwith, and where they were; and it is manifest that all the proprieties of the case, indicate the temple of Jerusalem as the very spot, where the Holy Ghost should descend upon the infant Church of Christ, and where his Apostles should inaugurate that Church amidst just such proofs of the mighty power of God, as attended that first Christian baptism. But the exigencies of the place and circumstances, as well as the narrowness of the time before pointed out, rendering one of two disputed modes of baptism impossible, the presumption is irresistible that the other mode, which was perfectly practicable at the place and under the circumstances, was the one adopted. I suppose it cannot be controverted that these events took place in the temple : for in immediate connection with the statement of them, it is said they continued daily with one accord in the temple,[1] and it is afterwards added that the Apostles ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ daily in the temple.[2] And moreover, it is expressly stated that the second great discourse of Peter, which he was arrested and imprisoned for preaching, and under which many believed, and the number of the men was increased to about five thousand ;[3] was delivered in the temple, in the porch that is called Solomon's.[4] It is significant that while it was said many of them that heard the word believed, there is no indication that any were then baptized ; it being eventide, and Peter and John who had gone there together, being put in hold unto the next day.[5] But even if it were conceded that the great scene on Pentecost did not take place in the temple ; or if it were conceded that although it did take place there, up to the actual administration of the Sacrament, and then the three

[1] Acts, ii. 46. [2] Acts, v. 42. [3] Acts, iv. 4.
[4] Acts, iii. 1–11. [5] Acts, iv. 1–4.

thousand persons were led away and immediately immersed somewhere else ; neither admission can beget a doubt as to the mode of their baptism. We have the means of knowing more about the city of Jerusalem, in all that bears upon the present enquiry, than about any decayed city that ever existed. And it may be pronounced to be certain, that nowhere in that city, on the evening of that day, was it possible for those three thousand persons to have been immersed off hand by the Apostles, without any previous expectation or preparation for the unparalleled occasion, in the space of time left to them. It could not have been done at the pool of Bethesda, which was near the temple ; for besides being in the possession of the priests, and being the common receptacle of the filth from the temple and of the blood and offals of the sacrifices, it was habitually without an adequate supply of water for immersion, at the season of Pentecost. It could not have been done at the brook Kidron, a turbid rivulet whose channel passed along the east side of Jerusalem, and was dry except in winter. It could not have been at Siloam, a small fountain depressed in the rock, some distance from the temple, at the foot of Mount Moriah and Mount Zion, and from which at some distance, a small rill emerged with an inconstant flow. No, it was not possible. It was by no such spectacle—by no such wild and confused attempt to display a burial in water as the sacramental commemoration of the mighty power of God, that day experienced by thousands and witnessed by all Jerusalem ; that the Kingdom of Messiah assumed its last and perfect form, as a dispensation of the grace of God unto salvation.

(*c*) *Nature of the Case itself, as divinely explained.* There is another aspect of the subject, which seems to me to have a controlling influence. The relation of the Holy Ghost to the sacraments of the New Testament Church, is as fundamental a part of the doctrine of these sacraments, as the relation of Christ himself to them. This relation of the Spirit is more obvious with regard to baptism than to the Lord's Supper. For the Lord's Supper being a special sacramental commemoration of Christ's propitiatory sacrifice, the relation of the Spirit to it is, that he uses it as one of the methods of applying to believers the benefits of that sacrifice. But he does this also with regard to the sacrament of baptism, and the benefits signified and sealed in it ; but does it in such a way as, in addition, to signify and

seal his own special work in our salvation ; this sacrament being a special sign and seal of the purification which the Spirit himself works in us. When the matter is considered in this light, it is easy to see why an immersionist represents baptism as a burial, and not a purification. For if we allow water, the visible sign in baptism and the visible purifier of all things sensible, to represent the work of the only purifier of all things spiritual, namely the Holy Ghost ; it is but a short step afterwards to the conclusion, that the manner of applying the water should symbolize, and not outrage, the manner of the application of the Spirit. The Lord Jesus took bread, and broke it, and said, take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you.[1] In like manner, this is God's Spirit poured out on us ; and why should we refuse to pour water, in token thereof, on him that is baptized? Throughout thirty years embraced in the Acts of the Apostles—throughout all their immense labours—I believe it will be impossible to find a single expression or act, suggestive of any conception of the work of the Spirit, which is justly represented by the immersion of the believer in water ; while the application of water to the believer justly represents the conception of the work of the Spirit, which the uniform language of Scripture suggests. No more decisive example of this need be sought, than is found in the narrative of the events of Pentecost ; in which numerous expressions occur illustrating what I insist on. Thus : Suddenly there *came* a sound from heaven—cloven tongues as of fire *appeared* unto them and *sat* upon them—they were *filled* with the Holy Ghost—they spake with other tongues as the Spirit *gave* them utterance—the whole was the result of God's Spirit *poured out upon* them—which, by special promise of the Father was *poured out* that day—the Lord Jesus having *received*, that promise had *shed forth* that Spirit which was to be *poured out* on all flesh—they were *pricked* in their heart—Peter told them they might *receive* the *gift* of the Holy Ghost—they gladly *received* the word—and were baptized.[2] All this appertains to the narrative of the first baptism, after the advent of the Spirit. Is it capable of belief that the sacrament which, on the spot responded to it all, was so administered as to conceal, confuse, and contradict the conception constantly suggested by the narrative ; when it might be so administered as to conform to it, illustrate it, and

[1] 1 Cor., xi. 23, 24.

[2] Acts, ii. *passim*.

enforce it! That a sacrament with water, after all this, did not mean purification, but did mean burial? That it did neither signify nor seal the outpouring of the Spirit, then operating graciously in the hearts of thousands, and miraculously before the eyes of thousands besides, and therefore water must not be applied to men; but did signify and seal the burial of the body of Jesus, and therefore men must be immersed in water? Upon a careful consideration of this immense and decisive example, I do not see a single circumstance compatible with the notion that these three thousand persons were immersed by the Apostles; but, on the contrary, it does appear to me to be certain that they were baptized by affusion—that is by sprinkling or pouring water upon them. Still however, I repeat, that I consider the perversion of the sacrament from its true nature and end, and the schism wrought in the Church of Christ in support of that perversion, far graver evils than a simple error as to the mode of using the sacramental element. For an error as to the mode does not necessarily annul the sacrament itself, nor necessarily produce schism. But schism is sinful of itself; and the perversion of the sacraments in their absolute nature, attacks the essence of faith, and the life of the Church.

3. Next in importance to the great example which I have considered, is the baptism of the company of Gentiles in the city of Cæsarea; concerning which the Scriptures give so full an account. By it, the right of the Gentile world to share in the life and immortality brought to light by the Gospel, was miraculously established, and openly sealed. By the events of Pentecost the Gospel Church is fully endowed with the Holy Ghost—and commences her sublime course. By the events at Cæsarea, eight years afterwards, she enters upon the greatness of her work, and is forced to understand that God manifest in the flesh is to be preached unto the Gentiles, and believed on throughout the world.[1] Ye shall be witnesses unto me, said the Saviour to the Apostles, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.[2] And now they had borne their testimony to Jerusalem, and Judea, and Samaria;[3] and the time had come to commence the world work. We have seen the majestic figure of Peter in the very front of the great scene when the kingdom of heaven was opened to the

[1] 1 Tim., iii. 16. [2] Acts, i. 8. [3] Acts, ix. 31.

Jews ; and now we see him chosen of Christ, according to his wonderful promise to him,[1] to open the Kingdom to the Gentile world. So Peter understood it ; and none could gainsay it. For when he recounted what he had done, they of the circumcision held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.[2] In the arduous years which had intervened, and during which such wonderful results had followed the labours of the early Christians ; so far was this great Apostle from losing the impression of the events of Pentecost, that the very declaration of the Saviour which filled his mind that day, and which he expounded to the Jews who crowded the temple, filled his mind again as he stood in the palace of the Roman soldier at Cæsarea, and expounded to the Gentile multitude the doctrine of Jesus of Nazareth. I remembered, said he, the word of the Lord how he said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.[3] God had shown both to him and Cornelius, that the whole matter was of his own divine ordination ; and as Peter uttered the words of eternal life, the Holy Ghost fell on the Gentiles as he had fallen on the Jews, and the same miraculous gifts were bestowed upon them. Well might Peter demand of those brethren of the circumcision, who afterwards contended with him, Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gifts as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God ?[4] He commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.[5] And now I will gather from this great example, the matter and manner of the baptism.

4. (*a*) *Matters common to the Baptism on Pentecost, and that at Cæsarea.* There is so much that is common to the two earliest Apostolic administrations of Jewish and Gentile baptism in the Christian Church, that much of what I have said concerning that, applies with equal force to this. There are two inspired accounts of this baptism in Cæsarea : one written by Luke, the other given in the words of Peter himself ;[6] and a third, but brief statement of the case by that Apostle, when the memorable decision concerning Gentile circumcision was rendered.[7] Not only are the operations of the Holy Ghost, and the

[1] Matt., xvi. 19. [2] Acts, xi. 18. [3] Acts, xi. 16 ; ii. 33 ; i. 5.
[4] Acts, xi. 17. [5] Acts, x. 48. [6] Acts, x. *passim ;* xi. 1–18.
[7] Acts, xv. 7–11.

reality and nature of his gifts continually insisted on ; but the manner also—his being given to us, poured out on us, his descending on us, filling us—is constantly stated. And throughout this transaction, the connection between the work of the Spirit and the sacrament of baptism, and between the nature of the application of the one inwardly and the other outwardly to us ; is as clearly stated and sustained, as I have shown it is in the account of the events of Pentecost. In this case as in the previous one, the idea that baptism is a sacramental representation of the burial of Jesus, and must be administered by burying us in water, is wholly destitute of any support. This case, therefore, like the other, presents two conclusive lines of proof ; one negative, showing the total absence of everything suggestive of, or consistent with, that conception of this sacrament and its nature and end, which immersion exacts ; the other positive, showing the existence of everything suggestive of, and consistent with, that conception of it which requires it to be administered *with* water and not *into* water. That is, upon any principle of symbolism immersion is necessarily confuted ; because it is neither a symbol of any known sacrament, nor of any known act of God, or grace in man. But the correspondence between the symbol and the thing sacramentally symbolized, is assumed as indispensable, when our immersion is declared to be symbolical of the burial of Jesus. Therefore, baptism being symbolical, it is impossible that immersion can be the mode. On the other hand, to purify men is the work of God, and to be pure is a grace in man ; and the purifying Spirit is poured out—and the application of purifying water to us, is a sacramental symbol. And this is the doctrine of the first Gentile, as well as of the first Jewish baptism by the Apostles of the Lord.

(*b*) *Circumstances peculiar to this Example.* As in the preceding case there were many circumstances, some of which have been considered, which were decisive of the nature of the sacrament and of the nature of its administration ; so in this case, besides those circumstances common to it and the previous example, there are others peculiar to it, which throw much light on the principles and acts involved in it. Of all the baptisms administered by the Apostles, this one alone seems to have been attended with great previous deliberation, to have been administered under controlling divine guidance against the previous scru-

ples and strong personal convictions of the Apostle, to have been seriously called in question after it was celebrated, and to have been ratified after deliberate consideration. Indeed the principle on which it rested according to the decision of the Apostles and Elders, by its working finally subverted all that was temporary and special in the religious institutions of Moses.[1] Cornelius, a Roman centurion doing military duty at Cæsarea, at that time the civil metropolis of Palestine, a devout man and one that feared God with all his house, generous in alms and constant in prayer; having been instructed in a vision by an Angel of God, sent a devout soldier and two household servants to Joppa, with a message to Simon Peter, that God required him to come and tell him words whereby he and all his house should be saved.[2] The day following the vision of Cornelius at Cæsarea, Peter had a vision still more remarkable at Joppa, the import of which he did not then understand; but the great and general sense of which God himself explained to be, that what he has cleansed is no longer common or unclean. While he still meditated on the vision, the messengers of Cornelius had arrived, and found the house of Simon the Tanner, and asked for Peter; and the Spirit had told Peter that the men were there and that he had sent them, and bade him go with them, nothing doubting. Instructed by the messengers from Cornelius concerning him, and concerning the vision he had, pondering the vision he himself had, acting under the immediate command of the Spirit; he went to Joppa expressly to teach the Gentiles the way of salvation through Jesus Christ. Accompanied by six brethren of the circumcision from Joppa, and the three messengers of Cornelius, Peter journeyed to Cæsarea during the two following days; ample time and opportunity being thus afforded him, for conference with God, with his own soul, with his brethren of the circumcision, and with the devout Gentiles of their company, touching the wonders of divine love and mercy, which none of them could doubt, were to be disclosed. Entering Cæsarea on the second day, he found at the house of Cornelius, beside his own household, his kinsmen and his near friends; a multitude of Gentiles gathered by the Gentile soldier to meet Peter, and now awaiting him in the latter part of the fourth day after the vision of Cornelius, and of the

[1] Acts, xi. 1–18; x. *passim*; xv. *passim*.

[2] Acts, x. 1–8, 30–33; xi. 13, 14.

third day after the vision of Peter.[1] Whatever, therefore, Peter may have said and done in the matter of this baptism, was in a very peculiar manner, with the divine approbation. Moreover, there was no possibility of his doing anything by surprise; for he had ample and repeated warnings both of God and man, of the nature of the service that lay before him. Nor yet of his doing anything, the manner of which would be unusual or amiss; for it was eight years since Pentecost—years to him full of labour and full of fruit in the whole work of an Apostle. In whatever way, therefore, he baptized all them who heard the word in the palace of Cornelius, that undoubtedly is the way in which he and his brethren had baptized the converted Jews on the day of Pentecost—and had baptized every penitent believer in Jesus, in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and in Samaria; and that beyond question, is the way in which every Gentile convert in all nations, and through all ages, ought to be baptized.

(*c*) *Its actual Administration.* Peter said, at once, to the Gentiles who awaited him, Ye know that what I have done is unlawful to me—for I am a Jew and ye are Gentiles. But I have done it because God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. For what intent, therefore, have ye sent for me? Cornelius recounted his vision, and what he had done in consequence of it; and telling Peter he had done well in obeying God, added solemnly, Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. As Peter began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word. He saw, and confessed, that God is no respecter of persons; that Jesus Christ is Lord of all. He preached Jesus to them—his word—his sacrifice—his resurrection—remission of sins through him—eternal judgment by him. In two respects the work was more remarkable than even that at Pentecost; for here the Holy Ghost fell on all who heard the word, and his miraculous gifts were manifest in them before they were baptized. All the glory, all the power of Pentecost, nay the very emotions and the very Scriptures came back to the illustrious man. Then remembered I, says he, the word of the Lord, how he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. And his humble and believing conclusion was, What was I, that I should withstand

[1] Acts, x. 19–27; xi. 11–14.

God? And his open demand was, Can any man forbid water, that these should be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? No man dared to forbid water. And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.[1] Such is the narrative. This company of Gentiles, these friends, kindred, and household of a Roman military officer, gathered in his palace to hear the Gospel, are converted to God and ought to be baptized. Has any one authority to forbid it? What says the centurion? What say the high Roman dignitaries, his friends and kinsmen there present? What say the astonished Jewish brethren from Joppa? No one—a single word! Then let them be baptized—is the command of the Apostle. Is there any suggestion to leave the room they occupied? Is there any suggestion about a pool, bath, pond, river, or anything of the sort? There must be water, for without it there can be no baptism: but is there the slightest hint that there must be water enough to immerse them, else they cannot be baptized? Is there any hesitation, any delay, any confusion, by reason of a sudden and unforeseen demand on Cornelius for a large and deep body of water;—or does not the irresistible impression of the scene indicate a demand for a small portion of water, for instant use? Is there any intimation of any spectacle, any procession through the streets of Cæsarea, the Roman centurion with his near friends, his kindred, his devout soldiers, and his domestic servants, led by Peter and six Jews from Joppa to a public immersion—all speaking strange tongues, and all Cæsarea filled with wonder? Nothing of the sort: nothing that can be tortured into correspondence with any such ideas. They are the growth of other ages—the product of a state of mind far different from that of the Apostles of the Lord. However great, perhaps unexpected, may be the issue of this Gentile baptism, it is plainly the will of God that it should be celebrated; and it is done. Done there—then; *with* water, not *into* it; not as a sacramental burial, but as a sacramental purification, commemorating the blood of Jesus sprinkled upon our hearts by the Holy Ghost. Done as it was in the recorded case of an Apostle, even the great Apostle of the Gentiles, when Ananias went to him at the house of Judas, in Damascus, and put his hands on him and said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared to thee in the way as

[1] Acts, x. 28–48; xi. 12–17; xv. 7–11.

thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales ; and he received his sight forthwith and arose and was baptized.*[1] Done as it was in the case of the Ethiopian Eunuch, with whom Philip riding through the desert between Jerusalem and Gaza, came to some water (επι τι ὑδωρ) ; and when both of them had gone down from the chariot to the water, Philip baptized him on the wayside ; and the Eunuch, no notice being taken of his condition after his supposed immersion, went on his way rejoicing.[2] Done as it was at Philippi, when Paul and Silas were beaten and imprisoned for casting out a devil ; and at midnight they prayed and sang praises unto God, and a great earthquake shook the foundations of the prison, and its doors were burst open, and every one's bands were loosed, and the keeper of the prison seeing how things were, would have killed himself ; but Paul saved his life and then sought to save his soul and the souls of all his house, through the blood of Jesus Christ preached unto them. In whom believing, he and all his were baptized straightway ; baptized, that is, in the prison, after midnight and before it was day.[3] Surely a wondrous night scene in a Roman prison, attending the first planting of the Gospel Church in the land of Japhet, eighteen centuries ago.[4]

5. We have, then, examples of various kinds ; and I have considered, more or less carefully, the conspicuous examples under each kind. The period embraced is, probably, more than twenty years ; those eventful years which followed the complete unction of the Apostles, the sublime proof of the glorification of Jesus, and of the commencement of the Dispensation of the Holy Ghost. The great example of Pentecost, and the great example of Cæsarea, one inaugurating the Gospel Church, the other making it palpable that God had granted unto the Gentiles repentance unto life, have been gone over with much particularity ; for when these two examples are thoroughly considered, all that belongs to baptism must respect what they determine. I have added, very briefly, the remarkable case of household

* Αναβλεψατε παραχρημα και αναστας εβαπτισθε. This Greek is even more decisive than our English version of it, that Paul was baptized in the place where he rose up, and that he rose up to be baptized. Standing up to be baptized, like Paul, is the common mode of baptism.

[1] Acts, ix. 17, 18.

[2] Acts, viii. 26–38.

[3] Acts, xvi. 25–35.

[4] Acts, xvi. 9–12.

baptism by Paul and Silas at Philippi ; and, also briefly, two conspicuous cases of strictly private baptism, that, namely, of Paul by Ananias, and that of the Ethiopian Eunuch by Philip. Peter most conspicuously, after him Paul, but in the wide sweep of the period and events, all the Apostles and the whole Church of Christ in its origin and during its first age, stand before us. After so many centuries and amidst so great conflict of human opinion, these all recall us to the simple and indisputable facts of the inspired record. They all demand of us the exercise of our best judgment and our spiritual insight, and afterwards our honest and enlightened verdict, according to the law and the testimony ; for if we speak not according to this word, God has told us, it is because there is no light in us.[1] For my part, I never gave a verdict of this kind, after more careful examination, or with deeper conviction of its truth. It seems beyond doubt that the Scriptures do teach that Baptism with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is a permanent sacrament of the Christian Church, wherein the ingrafting of the believer into Christ, his purification by the Holy Ghost, and the pardon of his sins, are signified and sealed to all who worthily receive it ; that it is the undeniable right of the infant seed of believers to have this sacrament administered to them, and the sacred duty of believing parents to have it done ; that while any endurable mistake in the mode of administering this sacrament does not nullify the ordinance, the only true mode of administration is that intended by Christ, practised by his Apostles, and recorded in the sacred Scriptures, which is by a minister of the word, applying the water to the subject, by pouring or sprinkling it on him : and, finally, that true baptism being once administered, must not be repeated under any circumstances whatever. On the other hand, I find nothing in the Scriptures to warrant the assertion that there is any sacramental commemoration by the mode of baptism of the burial of the body of Jesus, nothing to warrant the practice of immersion in the administration of baptism, nothing to warrant the refusal of baptism to the infant seed of believers, nothing to warrant the addition of any ceremonies, any adjuncts, any powers, any principles, by any authority under heaven, to this sacrament. As held forth in the Scriptures, and as practised by the Apostles,

[1] Isaiah, viii. 20.

the sacrament of Baptism is a most simple, complete, spiritual, and glorious ordinance of God; and whenever the followers of Christ content themselves with it as he instituted it, and his Apostles understood and practised it, they find that it is still, both a divine sign of God's eternal Covenant of Grace, and a divine seal of its great and precious promises.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER: CONSIDERED IN ITS INSTITUTION, NATURE, USE, AND END.

I. 1. Relation of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ to the more ancient Sacrament of the Passover.—2. Divine account of its Institution by Christ.—3. Its General Nature and ordinary Use, as taught in the Scriptures.—4. Matter and Elements of this Sacrament; what it signifies, and of what it is a Seal.—II. 1. The blood of the New Testament.—2. The Broken Body of Christ.—3. The Body and Blood of Christ given for us on the Cross, and sacramentally given to us.—4. The Cup the Communion of the Blood, and the Bread the Communion of the Body of Christ.—5. The sense in which the Bread is the Body of Christ, and the Cup is the blood of Christ.—6. Efficacy of the Body and Blood of Christ in our Sacramental Nourishment.—7. Relation of this Sacrament to the Worship, the Word, and the Spirit of God.—8. Relation of this continual showing of the Lord's Death, to his Second Coming.—III. 1. Strict Relation of Christ's sacramental action and Word, to the Nature and Definition of this Ordinance.—2. Relation of this Sacrament to the whole Question of the Church.

I.—1. How great was the honour put on the Jewish dispensation, that the Son of God scrupulously observed every ordinance of it! Not only did he obey the whole law of commandments contained in ordinances peculiar to it; but he respected the manner of use required by it, of those institutions more ancient and permanent than itself, upon which it had been ingrafted, and which it had in some degree modified. He did not come to destroy but to fulfil, the law and the prophets. And his sermon on the mount is, to a great extent, a development of this great and pervading truth in its application not only to the Mosaic Institutions, but to the whole compass of prophecy, to the true nature of the moral law, to all the duties of life, and to the way of salvation and the pursuit thereof by men. Thus it was in connection with his last celebration of the great annual sacrament of the Passover, that he instituted the Gospel Sacrament of his own broken body and shed blood. By means of that seal of God's special covenant with them—the heirs of promise, during the Mosaic dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, and back into the closing years of the Patriarchal

dispensation of it, had kept alive the remembrance of their bondage in Egypt and their miraculous deliverance from it; and had kept alive also the sense of their bondage under sin, of which their bondage in Egypt was so sharp a type, and of their everlasting deliverance through the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, to whom every paschal lamb slain during so many centuries had continually directed their faith.[1] It is Christ our passover sacrificed for us,—the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, by whose blood not only all the first born who were saved alive in Egypt, but every one of the first born whose names are written in heaven, have been redeemed.[2] And so from year to year through all generations, they kept their feast of unleavened bread, and ate by households with bitter herbs, the lamb slain by the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel. And so Christ with his Apostles, his immediate attendants, ate the passover the night before his crucifixion. And when the supper was ended, and Judas had been exposed and had departed to betray him, he instituted that sacrament in bread and wine which superseded the ancient sacrament; commencing where it closed, by the same authority which had created and sustained it for so many centuries. Thus it has continued to the present hour—according to his command. The Gospel Church by its congregations, by that organic manifestation which is elemental to its form of the Church visible on earth—does and has always done, essentially what the ancient Church by its families had done year by year from the night before its departure out of Egypt. And so it will do—attesting on one side the sacrifice, the faithfulness, and the second coming of the Lord—and on the other the ruin and the redemption of fallen man, till the Son of man shall come.* The difference lies in this, that the ancient sacrament preceded the incarnation of the Son of God, while the present sacrament is immediately connected with his crucifixion. The substance, namely Christ and redemption through his sacrifice, is the same; the form is changed to make its correspondence complete with the state of grace and truth under the Gospel Dispensation.

2. There are three detailed accounts preserved of what oc-

[1] John, i. 29; Rev., v. 6–9; Exod., xii. *passim.*

[2] 1 Cor., v. 7; Heb., xii. 23; Exod., xii. 12, 13; Rev., xiii. 8.

* John, xiv. 3; xxi. 22; Acts, i 11; iii. 19–21; 1 Cor., iv. 5; xv. 25, 26.

curred at the institution of this sacrament, and of the circumstances immediately connected with it: one by the Apostle Matthew, the other two by the Evangelists Mark and Luke.[1] To these the Apostle Paul has added a distinct but condensed statement of what Christ said and did concerning the sacrament when he instituted it, with which he has connected the commands of the Lord to him concerning the proper celebration of it.[2] The Apostle John, whose Gospel was written long afterwards, devotes his narrative of what occurred at the Last Supper, chiefly to circumstances which had been omitted or only partially stated in the previous accounts. He occupies five chapters of the twenty-one which compose his Gospel, with the acts and the teachings of Jesus, during the few hours which elapsed from the ending of the paschal supper, to his going forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron to the garden of Gethsemane[3]—where he endured his agony—was arrested during the night—crucified the day following, and already dead by the middle of the afternoon. In a very peculiar manner John has preserved the mind of the Lord concerning this wonderful ordinance; for besides what has just been intimated, the full and clear account of the relation between our inward spiritual life, and our participation of the body and blood of Christ, is preserved by him in the words of Christ in an earlier chapter of his Gospel.[4] Besides these numerous and explicit statements, the Old Testament Scriptures teach nothing more clearly than the whole nature, and use of the Passover; and the allusions of the New Testament Scriptures to the nature and use of the Lord's Supper are constant. It may be justly asserted, therefore, that nothing but voluntary ignorance, the seductions of false teachers, and the delusions of the Devil, can prevent any one who has the word of God in his hands, from knowing all that is needful for us to know concerning this solemn, affecting, and powerful ordinance of God. Of this let all judge from the following divine statement of the institution of this sacrament, which is one of the four to which I have alluded: For I have received of the Lord that which I have delivered unto you. That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you:

[1] Matt., xxvi. 1–35; Mark, xiv. 1–25; Luke, xxii. 1–38. [2] 1 Cor., xi. 20–34.
[3] John, xiii.—xviii. [4] John, vi. 26–71.

this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood : this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death, till he come.[1]

3. From the great and precious mass of divine instruction distributed throughout the word of God, and most especially throughout the New Testament Scriptures, I will endeavour to collect into a connected statement, as brief as possible, the matters which are taught us by the Lord and which appertain to his people, concerning the nature and use of this sacrament. As I have already shown, it was instituted by Christ himself, in immediate connection with the last passover he celebrated, and in place of it, as one of the two sacraments of his Church ; the other, as I have shown, being instituted by him after his resurrection, in the place of circumcision. This, instituted the night before his crucifixion, had immediate relation to it, and to the benefits which would result from it to his disciples : just as the other, instituted immediately before his ascent finally into heaven, had immediate relation to the benefits which his glorification would secure to his disciples—chiefly the Holy Ghost purchased by his blood, and to be sent with power, as his great witness, and the sole efficient agent in our salvation. This sacrament, therefore, like the other is perpetual : for as long as sinners are saved by grace, the work of Christ and the work of the Spirit, will be the form in which that grace is manifested—and these sacraments will be signs and seals of the covenant through which it flows to us. This do, said Christ concerning this sacrament, in remembrance of me. Baptize all nations—was his command concerning the other. All power is given to me in heaven and in earth : Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world : was his declaration, and his promise concerning the whole work committed to his Apostles. Unlike the other sacrament which cannot be lawfully repeated, as I have shown—this must be often repeated : must be, not only from its nature and the nature of the blessings it confers, as will be shown, but from the intention expressed by Christ at its institution. How often, he did not state—but often in comparison with the annual celebration of the passover which it superseded ; and in accordance with the

[1] 1 Cor., xi. 23–26.

practice of the Apostles, whose habitual celebration of it is recorded; though I do not think the Scriptures warrant any statement, on this point, more definite than this. It is in its nature a social, not a private ordinance; it is a communion appertaining to the family of Christ and therefore not general; but as to them it is public—and belongs to them as a Church, and not as individuals. And while the intimations of Scripture are that it was celebrated by the Church at the stated places of its worship,[1] I believe there is neither Scripture example nor precept affording the least countenance to any private, much less any individual celebration of it. The contrary practice, to a remarkable degree, obtained with regard to the other sacrament; which seems to have been administered privately, by households, and by thousands; in the temple, in the palace of Cornelius, in the houses of private persons, in prisons and by the wayside as circumstances required. The celebration of both is in the hands of the ministers of Christ, as stewards of the mysteries of God[2] —the nature of the duties to be performed therein, not only being proper to them and to none else—but the command of Christ concerning the celebration of both this and the other sacrament being, personally given to the Apostles, as teachers and rulers in his Church. It follows necessarily from what I have said, and moreover is distinctly taught, that every true follower of the Saviour is entitled, is in the highest degree interested, and is bound and obliged to partake of this sacrament; and that no one else has any right to partake of it, or can do so without impiety.[3] Every one should partake of both elements; the denial of the cup to private Christians, being a mere act of tyranny and impiety on the part of the Church of Rome.[4] But the infant seed of believers may not partake of it until they come to years of discretion, and have knowledge to discern the Lord's body; of which they must give satisfaction to those whose duty God has made it to decide in all cases, concerning that inward work of which baptism is the sign. For all who approach the table of the Lord are commanded to examine themselves, in order to the eating of that bread and the drinking of that cup, concerning many things that exceed the state of infancy.[5] And in like man-

[1] 1 Cor., xi. 18–22; Acts, xx. 7; James, ii. 6.
[2] 1 Cor., iv. 1; Titus, i. 7; Luke, xii. 42.
[3] 1 Cor., xi. 27–34; 2 Cor., vi. 14–17.
[4] 1 Cor., x. 15, 16, 21; xi. 26–28.
[5] 1 Cor., xi. 28.

ner no outward profession justifies any who are ignorant and ungodly, in partaking of these solemnities ; any more than connivance at such impiety can be justified on the part of the Church.[1] It is both from its author, its nature, the occasion on which it was instituted, and the authority of Scripture use, that this sacrament has derived its name. The passover was celebrated at night by divine command, and the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ ingrafted on it by him, was in its nature a communion both of the disciples with each other, and in a still higher sense, of them all with Christ. The Scripture calls it *The Lord's Supper.*[2] I do not mean to say that this sacrament should therefore be celebrated at night : for none of what may be called the fortuitous circumstances connected with the institution of the Supper, which have no connection with the design or nature of the ordinance, can be considered of any importance : though we should be extremely careful not to class amongst such circumstances, anything whose change or disuse may destroy or even weaken anything that does appertain to its nature or design.

4. It is no more possible to doubt that bread and wine are the elements with which this sacrament is to be celebrated, than that water is the element with which baptism is to be celebrated. The Lord Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake it and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body which is broken for you. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it ; for this is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins.[3] This is my covenant, said God unto Abraham, which ye shall keep between me and you and thy seed after thee : Every man-child among you shall be circumcised.[4] And so the passover, and the blood of it, and the observance of it, are continually called a token, a memorial, an ordinance, a sign, between God and his people. And thus Christ says, This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins :—a statement repeated in every account of the institution of this sacrament. Bread and wine, therefore, and they alone, are the outward and visible signs—elements—in this sacrament. What the bread

[1] 1 Cor., xi. 27–29 ; v. 6–13 ; 2 Cor., ii. 14–16 ; 2 Thess., iii. 6, 14, 15.

[2] 1 Cor., xi. 20.

[3] Matt., xxvi. 26–28 ; Mark, xiv. 22–24 ; Luke, xxii. 19–20 ; 1 Cor., xi. 23–26.

[4] Gen., xvii. 9–14.

is,—or is put in the place of, is declared by Christ to be his body broken for us ; and what the wine is—or is put in the place of, is declared by him to be his blood shed for us ; Christ and him crucified, is, therefore, the matter of this sacrament. And the inward and invisible grace signified and sealed to us, by this sacrament, are the blessings and benefits secured to us, by the sacrifice of Christ, considered in themselves, and considered in the fruits and effects thereof, wrought in us. It is the relation which God establishes between the thing done and the thing it represents, that makes one the sign of the other, and makes the sacrament, which embraces both, a sign of the covenant of grace. Moreover and in like manner, as the correspondence between the elements and the matter of the sacrament, makes one the sign of the other, and makes the sacrament the sign of the Covenant of Grace : so the relation established by God between the sacrament, and the inward and invisible grace which it signifies—makes the sacrament a seal, as well as a sign, of the Covenant of Grace. The matter of this sacrament, as has been shown, is Christ and him crucified : the sign is bread and wine, representing his broken body and shed blood : the things signified by the sacrament, are all the blessings and benefits of his vicarious sacrifice. But merely to signify these things to us, merely to represent them and recall them—never could save our souls. There must be, beyond that, a fitness in the sacrament to produce or to nourish in us the graces which must exist in order to our salvation : a divine correspondence, that is, between the sacrament and the inward and invisible grace of which it is the sign. But this correspondence is exact, complete, perfect. For Christ crucified, and he alone, can save us. The blessings and benefits he has secured for us, in his redemption of us, are the very, and the only things fitted to save us, or whereby we can be saved. And these wrought in us by the Holy Ghost produce in us all the fitness we have or could have, to be saved. This sacrament is, therefore, not only a sign, but also a seal of the Covenant of Grace.

II.—1. Christ not only said the wine was his blood but that it was his blood of the New Testament ; an expression of great import, and repeated by all the sacred writers who give account of the institution of this sacrament. I have constantly explained, that our salvation is the product of the eternal covenant between the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; which I have

called indiscriminately the Covenant of Grace because all grace is manifested through it, and the Covenant of Redemption because it is the Mediator of that covenant who has redeemed us with his most precious blood. I have also constantly explained that every one of God's elect is a party in interest to that eternal covenant, by reason of his covenanted Saviour the Son of God having represented him in it; and that every one becomes a party in fact, as soon as he is personally united to that Saviour in his effectual calling. Under this eternal covenant, and by way of giving special designation and emphasis to each successive dispensation of it, those dispensations as they arose were called covenants by God; and the special mercies they conveyed were made stipulations, and were solemnly ratified. Thus the visible Church had its origin in God's covenant with Abraham, called the covenant of circumcision from the seal of it, and the covenant of promise from its glorious stipulations.[1] Thus the Mosaic dispensation was formally initiated, by a solemn covenant between God and the children of Israel, who had already received in Egypt the propitiatory sacrament of the passover: a covenant under which everything was purified by blood—and everything first ministered to condemnation and then pointed to Christ.[2] That there was a better dispensation, a better covenant to come, Abraham and Moses and every true believer under both the dispensations which they respectively introduced, knew perfectly; nay the very covenants themselves had no efficacy, no import touching grace and salvation, except as they were founded on and stipulated the Mediator of the new and better covenant.[3] The Apostle Paul puts the matter past doubt; for he quotes at large the declarations of Jeremiah concerning the new covenant which God would make with his people, and declares that they mean Christ, and were uttered by the Holy Ghost.[4] When the Saviour said, This cup is the New Testament in my bloood, we are to understand that they who receive it have God's covenant in its supremest form—ratified as his own testament by Jesus, and sealed by his death upon the cross for us. His death gives, at the same moment, an endless validity to his testament, and an infinite ratification to the Covenant of Grace, as the Gospel covenant;

[1] Gen., xvii. 1–16; Acts, vii. 8; Eph., ii. 12.

[2] Exod., xxiv. *passim;* Heb., ix. 18–23.

[3] Jer., xxxi. 27–40. [4] Heb., viii. *passim;* x. 10–22.

and this blood of our great High Priest seals it all.[1] The Gospel dispensation is the covenant in the incarnate Redeemer, just as the dispensation of promise was the first covenant in Abraham, and the dispensation of the law was the old covenant in Moses.[2] And it is by the oath of God that Jesus was constituted the surety of this better covenant, being consecrated by that oath a priest forevermore, and by one offering of himself perfecting forever them that are sanctified.[3] The blood of Jesus is the blood of this covenant. Thus sealed by his death, this covenant becomes his testament. Sacramentally bestowed on us, it is the blood which the cup in the Eucharist signifies and seals. In it God stipulates remission of sins, and eternal life; and Christ stipulates for us Faith and Repentance; and through his blood, and word, and Spirit he works both of them in us. Penitent and believing sinners are, therefore, entitled to all the benefits of this covenant and testament—and sacramentally participate of the blood of Christ, which signifies and seals these benefits unto them.

2. In like manner, Christ not only said the bread was his body, but he broke it and said, This is my body which is broken for you: and these, also, are pregnant words. I have taught continually that union and communion with the Lord Jesus Christ, was the only way given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved; and that this union and communion are possible only by means of his participation of our nature through his incarnation, and our participation of his nature through our regeneration. But the possibility of our regeneration, depends in every way upon the efficacy of his atoning sacrifice; and that sacrifice was impossible but for his incarnation, and was without all efficacy but for his supreme Godhead, and had relation to us only through that eternal covenant of which he—God-man—was the Mediator. This broken bread is the symbol of the crucified God-man; and he has established between the symbol and the inward and invisible grace, such a relation as makes the one a sign of the other; and then such a relation between the matter and the sign united into a sacrament, and the effects of Christ crucified, as to make the sacrament itself a seal of the covenant under which the crucifixion occurred; that is of the eternal Covenant of Grace, and also of the special covenant of

[1] Heb., ix. *passim.*

[2] Gal., iv. 24–31.

[3] Heb., vii. 20–25; x. 10–15.

the Gospel dispensation under it. But Christ crucified is to every one that is called, both the power of God and the wisdom of God.[1] We are planted together in the likeness of the death of Christ; our old man is crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin ; and being dead with him, we believe we shall also live with him.[2] In knowing him and the power of his resurrection, we must have fellowship with his sufferings, and be made conformable unto his death.[3] Suffering with Christ, is the prelude of being glorified together with him.[4] Whether, therefore, we consider the crucifixion of Christ in itself and in the divine motives for it, or in the relation of it to the whole œconomy of the grace of God and of the salvation of man, or in the inward participation of it by every one of his followers through union and communion with him : we equally perceive the glorious pregnancy of these words of Christ, and the unspeakable fitness of the symbol to represent that for which it was put, and of the sacrament thus constituted to be a seal of the covenant under which he made satisfaction to God for us, and so a seal to us of all that he purchased for us by his death.

3. This sacrament is very far from being a mere exhibition of the death of Christ—a mere representation of the passion and sacrifice of the Son of God. If the whole of our relation to what Christ did and suffered, is satisfied by merely representing and exhibiting his agony and death ; we have much to learn about the burden, the curse, and the pollution of sin ; much about the love, the peace, the joy of a soul that has communion with him that died and rose again. If the whole of God's love for us which led him not even to spare his own Son, but on the contrary to deliver him up for us all, is expressed when his Son has done that which lost sinners need only represent and recall ; then his poor children in this world have pungent conceptions alike of their Father's love, and of their need of it, which he never excited in their souls, and will never fulfil. This is my body which is given for you : This is my blood which is shed for you. It is thus that Jesus speaks. His death is no representation : it is a vicarious sacrifice. The sacrament of his broken body and shed blood is not a mere exhibition: it is a sacrament in

[1] 1 Cor., i. 23, 24.
[2] Rom., vi. 5–8.
[3] Phil., iii. 10.
[4] Rom., viii. 17 ; 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

which the purchase of that body broken for us is sealed to us, and the purchase of that blood shed for us is sealed to us. He gives to us tokens of inestimable blessings, already secured for us at an inestimable price : he gives to us seals of that covenant ordered in all things and sure, in which these blessings are promised to us. We accept, with loving, confiding hearts the token and the seal. But this is not all. Is no inheritance secured ? Is no earnest of it bestowed? No sure participation, here and now, not merely of signs and seals, but of Jesus, of his death and of his resurrection ? I am—said Jesus—the bread of life : he that cometh to me shall never hunger ; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.[1] Beyond all doubt they who are redeemed by the sacrifice of Christ, have along with their redemption, unspeakable blessing and benefits, which are explained throughout the Scriptures with great fulness and great minuteness, the whole of which are gifts of God, through Jesus Christ.[2] All these and every covenanted mercy and every grace of the Spirit, are purchased for us by the body and blood which was broken for us and shed for us on the cross ; and all of them with that body and blood, are sacramentally sealed to us,—and are ours. To suppose the sacrament has any efficacy of itself, is to destroy its nature as a sign and seal of the Covenent of Grace—that is—to destroy it as a sacrament ; and is, moreover, to set aside the work of the Holy Ghost, upon whom the efficacy of all things spiritual depends, as really as their authority depends on Christ ; thus subverting, on the one hand, the way of life, and on the other life itself. To deny to the sacrament any reality beyond a mere exhibition and representation of the sacrifice of Christ, is either to annul it altogether, by destroying its divine fitness through the work of the Spirit to accomplish its proper end in us ; or it is to go deeper still, and annul the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ who is the matter of the sacrament, by converting it from a satisfaction into a representation, thus rendering it incompetent for anything but another representation.

4. In addition to what has been particularly noticed, the Lord Jesus said, Take, eat, this is my body : and in like manner, giving them the cup, Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of

[1] John, vi. 35, 56.

[2] Col., i. *passim* · Eph. i. *passim.*

sins. The Apostle Paul, illustrating the fellowship of Christians with each other, and of all with Christ, demands, The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?[1] And the Apostle John, appealing to his own knowledge of the word of life, which was manifested and was capable of being shown to others as eternal life, declares, That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.[2] Salvation consists, summarily, in our union and communion with Christ through faith; and the visible Church of Christ rests upon his headship over all thus united to him by faith,—and their communion with each other by love; the efficacious bond in both instances, being that of the Spirit. It is the Body of Christ, considered as his Church, nourished by his body and blood sacramentally given to them by him and received by them. It is a communion of saints with each other by means of a joint communion in the body and blood of Christ; and a communion of the whole with Christ, at the same time, and by the same means. And so completely is this realized in this sacrament, that it is called the communion of the Lord's Supper, or simply The Communion. Nor is there any other way known, nor as far as we can comprehend, possible, by which these sublime spiritual realities can be made at once perfectly simple and efficacious, comparable to the way thus provided by the Lord. Our love for each other is both manifested and nourished, and our common increase in all that is sealed to us is itself a precious communion; while the communion of all with our common Lord, opens in him the fountain of inexhaustible grace, which all receive from him. But who does not see that if all this be true, it establishes with divine certainty the nature of the sacrament through which it all occurs? How could the cup we bless be a cup of blessings such as these, if it were not the communion of the blood of Christ? How could the bread we break, produce such spiritual nourishment as this, if it were not the communion of the body of Christ?

5. It seems to me that any serious consideration of the words of Christ when he intituted this sacrament, and which conveyed to his disciples ideas, which under so many forms of expression

[1] 1 Cor., x. 16. [2] 1 John, i. *passim.*

throughout the New Testament, present the very same truths ; ought to satisfy every one who has the least spiritual insight, at least of the general sense in which he wished to be understood. I need not deny that there is much involved in this great mystery of communion with Christ, no matter in what aspect the sublime topic is presented, which far exceeds our finite comprehension ; since he who was not inferior to the chiefest of the Apostles, habitually speaks nearly to the same effect. Speaking of Christ as the head of the Church and the Saviour of it as his body, of his love for it, of his giving himself for it, of his sanctifying and cleansing it with the washing of water by the word, and then presenting it to himself a glorious Church ; he goes so far as to say, For we are members of his body, and of his flesh, and of his bones. And then adds—This is a great mystery : I speak concerning Christ and his Church.[1] And this language is not more decisive, than that which Christ used not only when he instituted the Sacrament of the Supper, but a year before his crucifixion in a discourse which has been preserved by John ; after which, many of his disciples, understanding him to teach hard sayings which they could not receive, went back and walked no more with him.[2] His own explanation to his Apostles was, It is the Spirit that quickeneth ; the flesh profiteth nothing ; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.[3] It is impossible, therefore, to suppose, that Christ meant that the bread was physically his body or the wine physically his blood, or that his disciples physically eat his flesh and drink his blood ; impossible, because, as we see, he said that would be of no profit to them, and that it was his Spirit and word which made his flesh and blood a means of life to his followers. Indeed it is obvious, as I intimated before, what the general sense of his words is. He uses both sets of terms throughout, and therefore we must accept both throughout. We cannot, without violence, allow with the Papists, that the bread and wine are by consecrating them transubstantiated into the soul, body, blood, and divinity of Christ ; for then, to say nothing else, one set of terms used throughout has disappeared,—and the ordinance has become a gross impiety. For the same reason, we cannot allow with the Socinians, that the whole is a mere representation ; for then the opposite set of terms has disappeared, and the ordinance has become an empty show. We cannot allow

[1] Eph., v. 23–32. [2] John, vi. 26–66. [3] John, vi. 63.

with Luther that consubstantiation has taken place, and that the body and blood of Christ are present in, with, and under the bread and wine; for then both sets of terms are outraged by confounding what Christ has carefully kept seperate; and pretending to eat both bread and Christ's body, and to drink both wine and Christ's blood, we combine into one error the opposite misconceptions of the Papists and the Socinians. All that is left is to accept and respect both sets of terms. And in effect, while no other conception of this sacrament can be justly gotten from the terms of its institution, none can be gotten from any other scriptural representation of it, which does not require the use of both sets of terms to express it. The bread is bread and is eaten, and the wine is wine and is drunk; and so are Christ's words. But the body and the blood of Christ are as really the matter of the sacrament, as the bread and wine are the symbols used in it: and the relation between the matter and the symbol is instituted by God, and is so immediate that the name of the matter is given to the symbol: and the matter and the symbol—thus related and united by God—unitedly make the sacrament. Physically, the symbols bread and wine are present to our senses. Spiritually, the matter, Christ crucified, his body and his blood, are present to our faith. To express more strongly the reality of this spiritual presence, we may call it mystical; by which we mean that it is spiritual, but real. Just as our union with Christ is real, but spiritual, that is, it is mystical; and just as the Church itself, the Body of Christ, is a spiritual but real body—that is, it is a mystical body. We cannot, of course, eat the broken body of Christ and drink his shed blood, in any other sense or manner than that in which they are present with us; but I have shown that they are present after a manner that is real but spiritual, that is, mystical; in that manner and in that sense, therefore, and in no other, we participate of Christ crucified, in the communion of the Supper. It is a sacrament.

6. The doctrine of transubstantiation leads directly to the sacrifice of the mass, and to the idea that the Christian ministry is a priesthood who offer sacrifices; namely the sacrifice of Calvary repeated continually in an unbloody form, as it is expressed. The whole of this is the grossest heresy and impiety. Christ is the Great High Priest of our profession, a Priest forever after the order—not of Aaron—but of Melchisedek; and after him

there is no priesthood at all, except in the sense of the royal priesthood of every brother of Christ, adopted as a son of God. The offering up of himself by Christ once, one sacrifice for sins forever, by which he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified,—put an end to all offerings and sacrifices for sins : whereof we have the explicit and repeated assurance of God, who even declares that the Holy Ghost is a witness to us of these truths.[1] It was not to repeat the sacrifice of Calvary, but to give efficacy to it in the souls of men, that all the means of grace under the Gospel dispensation received their present form. By that sacrifice of himself Christ has redeemed the elect of God : redeemed them in every sense and to every intent. It is not to add anything to what Christ has done, nor to repeat anything he has done, that the sacrament in his body and blood was instituted ; but its use is to show forth his death, and by participation of him, to nourish and strengthen his disciples in all grace, to exhibit and to seal their union and communion with him and their communion with each other, and to testify and renew their covenant with him. In what manner the body and blood of Christ,—that is, in what manner the crucified Saviour can effect the whole of these spiritual objects—or any one of them : is an enquiry, which if directed to the possibility of such an efficacy, goes to the root of the question of salvation by grace through the Mediator ; or if directed only to the particular manner of that efficacy, goes to the root of the nature of this sacrament. Considered in the former light, the answer is immediate, that unless salvation by grace through the Mediator is a divine reality, neither is the efficacy enquired after—nor the sacrament by which it operates, a divine reality : all are nullities together—if the foundation of all is a nullity. Considered in the latter light, the answer is also immediate, and lies upon the face, and is wrought into the nature of the sacrament. Bread and wine nourish the human body—if we partake of them according to their nature and ours ; they do this by a mysterious vital process of assimilation ; the effect of which is our support and continued existence. In like manner the body and blood of Christ crucified for us, nourish our souls, if we partake of them according to their nature and ours, that is their sacramental nature and our renewed nature ; they do this through a mysterious spiritual process, expressed by the

[1] Heb., x. 10–18.

terms faith, the new creature, and the work of the Holy Ghost; the effect of which is a closer communion with Christ and with each other, and the comfort and growth of the spiritual life. There is a manifest difference between bread, and the act of him who eats it, and the nourishment which is produced by it,—and the process of assimilation by which the end is reached. There is also a manifest difference between the body and blood of Christ, and the faith of the Christian which rests upon Christ crucified, and the fruit of that faith manifested in us, and the work of the Holy Ghost which produced that faith and now nourishes it in this manner. The declarations of the word of God, and the testimony of our own experience, and the witness of the Holy Ghost, are the grounds on which we assert the latter series of facts. There are no more conclusive grounds on which to assert the former series of facts. The efficacy on which everything in both series depends, is wholly inscrutable : it is in God. That Christ crucified is the matter of which bread and wine are the symbols, in the Sacrament of the Supper, and that as such he is sacramentally received, and does nourish our souls ; is not only the plain doctrine of this sacrament, but is in exact harmony with everything else taught in the Scriptures, concerning the whole doctrine of our union and communion with Christ. In one sacrament we are baptized into his death : in the other we have communion with his crucifixion : all the time the glorified God-man is at the right hand of the majesty on high. In the former sacrament our ingrafting into Christ and our purification by the Holy Ghost—in the other our redemption and nourishment by Christ, are signified and sealed. In this life it is mainly fellowship with his sufferings, and death—in the life to come fellowship with his resurrection. In both worlds union and communion with him—is salvation.

7. The connection of divine worship, the divine word, and the divine Spirit with the proper administration and worthy partaking of this sacrament, is indissoluble The inspired accounts of its institution agree that its celebration was accompanied by thanksgiving, and benediction by the Saviour. Jesus took the bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave it to the disciples ; and he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them. Such are the statements. His directions, also, were clear ; take, eat, drink, this do in remembrance of me. The universal obligation

resting on us to sanctify everything by the word of God and prayer,[1] is made very special in this case, both by what the Lord did and by what he said. And if anything were wanting to add force to this obligation, it would be found in the fact that it is only by means of the blessing of God, and through the presence and inward work of the Holy Ghost, that any blessing is found in the use of this ordinance ; while the state of our own souls may exclude us from the blessings which, so to speak, appertain in a particular manner to the worthy reception of it. Moreover, the peril of trifling with the sacred and mysterious ordinance, much more the impiety of intentionally profaning it, ought to be well considered by such as do not discern the Lord's body ; since it may well happen that eating and drinking unworthily, men may eat and drink damnation to themselves.[2] Without the knowledge which the divine word alone can give us, whereby we might discern the Lord's body, the spirit of true worship in which it becomes us to approach God in this sacrament of that body, cannot be in us ; and in this condition, we have much more reason to dread that the Spirit may be grieved, than to hope for any fellowship with him. And yet it is of the very nature of this sacrament, to be fitted to produce—when used by the divine Spirit to that end—as a seal of the covenant of grace, those inward graces of which it is the sign : and I may add, nothing else has that sacramental fitness with reference to those special graces. Divine truth is specially fitted to produce faith and repentance, and invariably does produce them, when used to that end by the Spirit ; while no other truth is fitted to produce either faith or repentance ; nor is any other ever used in the production of either by the Spirit. So also, all divine ordinances are specially fitted to produce, and when used to that end by the Spirit, do produce the effects appointed of God ; and nothing besides them is fitted to produce their effects, or is used by the Spirit to produce them. The great offices of the Spirit in salvation, have immediate relevancy to the Lord Jesus Christ : and both the sacraments of the Christian Church have a similar immediate relevancy to him. We as easily see, therefore, how the efficacy of the sacrament depends on the Spirit, as we see how its authority depends on Christ. And we might as soon, perhaps, to speak after the manner of men, we might sooner expect the Spirit

[1] 1 Tim., iv. 5.

[2] 1 Cor., xi. 28–32.

to own and bless uttered falsehoods dishonouring to Christ, than sacramental falsehoods dishonouring to him. If this sacrament is that divine spiritual reality which I have endeavoured to represent, it is impossible to doubt its divine relation to the worship, the word, and the Spirit of God; impossible not to perceive in that divine relation, which it is easy to establish independently, convincing evidence of its own nature and use.

8. All that has been considered is founded on the words of Christ uttered when he instituted this sacrament, but uttered separately of his body and the symbol of it, and of his blood and the symbol of it. Paul speaking of all together, adds immediately, as part of what he received of the Lord, For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.[1] As often, therefore, as we celebrate this communion of the body and blood of Christ, it is bread that we eat, and it is wine that we drink; but this bread and wine are put for the body and blood of Christ, and it is by breaking and eating the bread, and by pouring out and drinking the wine—that we show his death. The efficacy of that death for our redemption—and the certainty of our present participation of that crucified Saviour and of eternal life through him; are all assured by the resurrection and glorification of the Lord. Being planted in the likeness of his death, we are also planted in the likeness of his resurrection. We are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.[2] And so we are to show forth the Lord's death, till he come. This sacrament touches on one side, the crucifixion, on the other the second coming of the Lord, covering the whole space between them, having special relation to the former, and pointing continually to the latter. For Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming.[3] It is that coming of the glorified Lord, in which they that are his will be made alive by their resurrection from the dead, and will appear in glory with him who is their life; to which his saints must continually have reference, both as real and as not having yet taken place, as

[1] 1 Cor., xi. 26. [2] Col., iii. 3, 4. [3] 1 Cor., xv. 20–23.

often as, and as long as, they sacramentally show his death. While the Saviour sat with his Apostles, and apparently before instituting this sacrament, he said unto them, With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.[1] And again, apparently after he had instituted this sacrament and his Apostles had partaken of its elements, he said, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom.[2] A little after he said, I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me: that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.[3] This sitting on thrones and judging, accordiag to his previous promise to them, will occur when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, and all his followers shall inherit eternal life.[4] I suppose, therefore, that the Lord did not mean to refer in what he said, to those few occasions on which, after the resurrection, he partook of food and drink with his disciples, apparently to satisfy them of his own identity;[5] but to that coming and estate of the kingdom of God, and that consummation of the work appointed by him unto his Apostles, and that further consummation of the New Testament in his blood, which he had before explained by the parable of the marriage supper of the King's son;[6] and concerning which the Apostle John, repeating the Alleluias of the redeemed, and relating the glory of the Lamb's wife, and the joy in heaven that his marriage had come—writes, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.[7] Whatever of glory and blessedness is in store for us, is purchased for us by the blood of Christ; and the more perfect our communion is with him in his death, the more complete is our appreciation of all divine things, and the more entire is our fitness for all divine blessings.

III.—1. The manner in which this sacrament was administered by Christ, and ought to be always administered by his fol-

[1] Luke, xxii. 15–18. [2] Matt., xxvi. 29. [3] Luke, xxii. 29, 30.
[4] Matt., xix. 28, 29; xxv. 31, 34, 46. [5] Acts, x. 41.
[6] Matt., xxii. 1–14. [7] Rev, xix. 1–9.

lowers, is set forth with great particularity in the Scriptures. His example ought to be sufficient ; but when we consider that everything he did was significant, and that all departures from his example have led to superstition and heresy, we see the more plainly that it is a wise and trustful obedience, which conforms exactly to that example of the Lord. Therefore the bread and the cup are to be taken by him who is to administer the Sacrament, and so separated unto their peculiar end : they are to be set apart from a common to a sacramental use, by the word of God, and by special prayer, thanksgiving and blessing : the bread is to be broken and distributed amongst those who communicate : the wine being poured out, the cup is to be taken and distributed amongst those who communicate : the bread is to be taken in the hand of the communicant, and is to be eaten by him : the cup is to be taken into the hand of the communicant and the wine is to be drunk by him. At the proper times, and suited to the proper parts of the sacramental action, the Lord's minister should repeat the Lord's words, according as they were uttered : and they who communicate, reverently, waiting on the Lord, and decently exhibiting their mutual fellowship in a common and simultaneous participation, should solemnly and believingly eat and drink the symbols of the broken body and shed blood of Christ Jesus their Redeemer. Though there be two elements, there is but one sacrament : and the power of administration is not joint, but several : wherefore all the parts of the sacramental action that appertain to him who ministers in the place of the Lord, appertain to a single and the same minister ; just as in the sacrament of baptism. They who worthily and with preparation of heart, wait upon him who said, This do in remembrance of me ; will find his promises fulfilled unto them, to the great peace and edification of their souls. And it may be confidently asserted that the natural effects of bread and wine upon those who receive them physically, are neither better assured nor more explicable after their kind ; than the gracious effects of the body and blood of Christ crucified are, upon those who receive them spiritually, after their kind. For this communion is a sacrament of the Covenant of Grace, under the Gospel dispensation, instituted by Christ, wherein by the breaking and eating of bread his broken body and by pouring out and drinking wine his shed blood,

are signified and sealed, together with all the benefits of his crucifixion, unto all who worthily commune.

2. With respect to each individual Christian, this sacrament is the means of a most solemn, gracious, reiterated, and irrevocable dedication of himself to God as his God, and to the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour. In return he receives from God pardon, holiness, light, strength, comfort, peace, and joy through the divine ordinance, word, and Spirit. For the crucified Saviour in all his past work, in all his present power, and in all his future glory, is sacramentally assured herein, to the penitent and believing sinner, on whose behalf is God's eternal Covenant of Grace, and under it the New Covenant which is a testament in the blood of Christ. With respect to the whole company of believers, who are the Church of the living God, the Bride of the Lamb, and the Body of Christ, we see how this and every other gift of her husband and Lord, who gave himself for her ; consecrates her to himself, and separates her from a world lying in sin and under the curse of God. She had the promise of her Saviour, the constant revelation of the will of God, and the presence of his Spirit, before she had any permanent sacrament. With the covenant of promise in Abraham, came circumcision and her own visible and separate existence ; with the covenant of sacrifice in Moses, a covenant in the blood of beasts, came the passover, and the written word, and her more complete, and ordered, and separate Church state : with the New Testament in the blood of Christ, came baptism and the Lord's Supper, the complete and permanent revelation of the will of God—Christ incarnate, crucified, risen, and glorified, the Spirit poured out, and all the ordinances of God, and all the ascension gifts of Christ, peculiar to the Gospel Church. All the time it is the elect of God, the Bride of the Lamb, the Body of Christ, the Church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven : and all are proofs of eternal, unalterable, unsearchable, divine love for her. These are sublime and infinitely fruitful truths. Upon the foundation they establish, the whole doctrine of the Church must rest. Whatever will not endure to be built on them, can be no portion of the house of God. Whatever they subvert, is divinely subverted. They guide us, from all that concerns the humblest believer considered as a member of Christ, onward through the whole question of the Church, to the highest generalization that

concerns the kingdom delivered up to the Father on the Lamb's Book of Life: illuminating the entire career of the Church, from the beginning to the end. As soon as we let them go, we are lost in darkness, amidst the innumerable revolutions of opinion, and the interminable disputes of men, concerning things with regard to which no opinion is of any value, and about which no man can know aught of any worth, except as divine light is shed upon them. Amongst all the benefits which Christ's faithful ministers could confer on his Church, none could compare with a successful effort to recall her completely to these grand and simple truths, the perversion of which has cost her so much.

CHAPTER XXXI.

OFFICE BEARERS IN THE GOSPEL CHURCH: AND THE GOVERNMENT IN THEIR HANDS.

I. Office Bearers, and Government in their Hands.—1. Considered in their relation to all Society: and to the particular society called the visible Church of Christ.—2. As appertaining to the Church, they appertain in a still higher sense to Christ.—3. Fundamental principle of the Divine Origin and authority of both, commensurate with the existence of the visible Church: proved and illustrated by the example of the Apostolic synod of Jerusalem.—4. The Divine Example of that synod particularly considered; and the Fact, the Nature, and the Perpetuity of Church Government demonstrated.—5. The Office Bearers who constituted it: and first of the Apostles considered as uniting in the Administration of the government they had formed.—6. Of the Elders—in whose Hands the Divine Government of the Christian Church is permanently and exclusively lodged—II. 1. The actual origin of the Christian Church, its Government, its Office Bearers, and its Tribunals: Its particular congregations, and the Tribunal in each.—2. Progress and development of the Government: Nature, Organization, Divine Authority of Tribunals Presbyterial, Synodical and Universal.—3. The Nature of Church Power as delegated by the Mediator: its relation to his Offices of Prophet, Priest, and King: the fundamental distinction in its Nature and Use, as the *Power* of *Regimen* and the *Power* of *Order*.—4. The Perpetuation of Office Bearers and Government in their hands, by Vocation of God, immediate and mediate.—III. 1. Other Office Bearers; Prophets, inspired and temporary.—2. Deacons: Divine Authority, Nature, and permanence of their Office.—3. Evangelists: Divine Authority, and peculiar Nature of their office.—IV. 1. Summary of the Fundamental Principles of Church Government.—2. The Phenomenon exhibited in the Origin, Development and Progress of such a Government.

I. In the preceding chapters of this Fifth Book, I have endeavoured to explain the chief gifts of God to the Church of Christ, which I had attempted to demonstrate in the Fourth Book. In the first place came God's supreme gifts to the Church—namely, his Son, his Spirit, and his Word. Then the great Ordinances which he has bestowed on her, namely, the Sabbath, the Sacraments, Instituted Worship, Discipline, and Evangelization of the world. And then, on account of their immense importance, the two Sacraments of the Gospel Church have been separately discussed. What remains, is to demonstrate the Office Bearers ordained by God in the Christian Church, and the Gov-

ernment in their hands which he has appointed therein. Partly for the sake of brevity, and partly on account of the indissoluble connection of the subjects, they will be discussed together.

1. As soon as we conceive of society as organized, no matter for what purpose, and no matter how, there arises a necessity for the designation, in some manner, of persons to perform for it those offices which, whatever, they may be, society cannot perform in mass, and without the performance of which, society cannot exist. These persons are officers. There is a multitude of ways in which they may come into office ; a multitude of conditions on which they may hold office ; a multitude of official duties, functions, powers—very various, and capable of being distributed in numberless ways. In all these respects the simple, limited, and powerful elemental principles of government, which I have pointed out in another place, are susceptible of endless variety in their practical exhibition ; and, therefore, government itself is presented under so many diverse aspects. But in every case, under every modification, the office bearer under every form of organized society, is the office bearer of the society, and performs its offices, for its benefit, and on its behalf. Otherwise, he is a mere intruder, usurper, and tyrant, holding simply, by force ; whose acts do not subvert society, but ordinarily defeat the proper ends, and always defeat the proper mode of its existence, until he is taken out of the way. The apothegm of the despot who said, I am the State, was as true as it was insolent. Nevertheless, there could be no despot, if there was no State ; and the powers he usurps are not created by him, but flowing from the existence of society, are grasped and abused by him. The Church visible of Christ is subject, in these respects, to the laws and conditions belonging to the nature of all societies, organized out of human beings. Every office bearer in her bosom, is her officer; and his existence is necessary, because the continuance and perfection of her own organized existence, depends on the performance of offices, which she cannot discharge in mass. In the nature of the case, therefore, duty and power, obligation and authority, responsibility and control, go together. But, as I have before explained, the visible Church is a society of a peculiar kind, created in a peculiar manner, and for peculiar purposes. Of necessity, therefore, those great principles and truths which lie in the nature of man and of society, must incur, in this pecu-

liar use and direction of them, such a combination and application of them, as the nature and end of this peculiar society demand ; precisely as in all other cases of their practical application. This is a society having primary reference, not to this but to a future life, not to temporal but to spiritual things : a society perfectly free, separate from the world, consecrated to Christ, and so divinely prohibited from making laws for itself, but required to obey, to expound, to proclaim, and to execute laws given to it by God. A society nevertheless ; and by consequence possessed of officers and a government. Indeed it is by far the oldest society in the world ; having existed through successive dispensations in a visible form, and in unbroken succession, since the covenant of circumcision was made by God with Abraham ; and in its present form as the Gospel Church, since the day of Pentecost. The fact of its organized and perpetual existence, is the most palpable fact in the public history of the human race ; and the divine authority for its existence, from the beginning to the end, is far more frequently and variously declared throughout the Scriptures, than the divine authority for anything else that exists.

2. This most ancient and permanent society, concerning whose officers and government we are enquiring, is not only an ordinance of God, like the family, and the State ; but, as I have abundantly proved, it is an ordinance resting absolutely in divine revelation and divine acts, having relations both to God and man, the whole of which are revealed. It is a society created by the special grace of God, out of those who are united to the Lord Jesus Christ, by means of a divine regeneration of the Holy Ghost ; and it is intended to be the chief witness for time and throughout eternity, to his whole intelligent Universe. It is the Kingdom of God, which his Son, Messiah the Christ, has redeemed with his most precious blood ; which his divine Spirit creates and sanctifies ; which the brethren of Christ, sons and heirs of God, compose and hold forth as the Church of the living God. The relation of the Son of God to this society is inexpressibly close and powerful. He is the Mediator between God and men of the Eternal Covenant under which it exists ; and the Gospel form in which it now exists, as compared with its preceding forms, is in a special sense the New Testament in his blood. To be Mediator, he took their nature into eternal union with his own divine nature ; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself so as

to become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross for them. As Mediator, he is the Prophet, the Priest, and the King of his Kingdom; by his word and Spirit the Teacher of it, by the sacrifice of himself, the Redeemer of it, and now glorified, he is the only head, ruler, and Lord of it. Nothing exists in it, except according to the will of God, except through the authority and in the name of the Lord Jesus, except by the effectual working of the Holy Ghost. It follows, that whatever office bearers may appertain to this wonderful society, however they may be its officers, as I have already explained, must be in a still more strict sense the servants, the ministers of Christ: and whatever government of this Kingdom may be in the hands of the servants and ministers of Christ, is his government, administered in his name and for his glory. Undoubtedly it is conceivable that offices of various kinds might exist, and that governments of various kinds might also exist, as God might see fit to order his Kingdom. But it is not conceivable, under the data, that offices should lawfully exist in such a Kingdom, or that it should lawfully assume any form of government, except in the name, by the authority, and through the ordination of the King eternal, immortal, invisible. The more precisely it can be shown what office bearers he has ordained, and what government in their hands, the more unquestionable is the divine warrant for it and for them. But the point now insisted on is that most peculiar to this divine society, namely, that its officers are also officers of Christ, and its government in their hands is also the government of Christ. And however clear and important may be the relation of all office bearers and government to the Church as hers; the relation of both to Christ as his, is still clearer and more important. But all this concludes both ways to the divine authority of Church office bearers, and Church government in their hands. For, first, if the Church be related to Christ as his in the sense shown, then necessarily her organization as has been shown at large, and by consequence her officers and government in their hands, are his—and so are divine. And, secondly, if in addition, these office bearers are his Apostles, his Prophets, his Pastors, his Elders, his Deacons, not only as they are exercising offices ordained by him, but as they are also called and sent by him, in their respective places and with their respective functions; then if anything is of divine authority, such office bearers and government are.

3. My space does not permit me to discuss of the nature of the office bearers of the Church, anterior to the founding of the Gospel dispensation ; nor, desirable as it would be, do I suppose it to be of absolute necessity here. Nothing, however, can be more certain than that God called Abraham, and made the covenant of promise with him ; that he called Moses, and by him led the Israelites out of Egypt, and made with them the covenant in the blood of beasts in the wilderness ; and that under these covenants, everything that existed in the Church of God from Abraham to the day of Pentecost, was exactly ordered and established, and did appertain both to God and the Church, in the manner I have already explained. The principles established, namely the divine origin of all government in the Church and the divine vocation of all who bear office in it, had been commensurate with the whole existence of the visible Church, from its own origin to the day when the Apostles received their complete unction from the Holy Ghost, to execute in the name and by the authority of the glorified Saviour, the whole power he had committed to them concerning his Kingdom in this world. So far were those Apostles from supposing that these fundamental principles were changed ; they furnished in their own persons and office, an example not less illustrious certainly than any that had gone before, of the unalterable perpetuity of both of them, and of the foundation of the Gospel Church State upon them. In which respects, those great principles agree with all others that are fundamental in the nature of God's Kingdom ; as I have shown with reference to the Sabbath, the Sacraments, the associated ideas of sacrifice and priesthood, and every other great ordinance of God which I have had occasion to discuss. It took many years and unquestionable miracles to make the Apostles understand, that the Gentile world were to partake with the seed of Abraham of the blessings of the Gospel ; and many more years and miracles to make them see, that the Gentiles were entitled to partake of these blessings, free from the yoke which more ancient covenants had imposed ; and many more years, and the most wonderful interpositions of God, to make the Jewish converts understand that Jesus had released them also from the same bondage.[1] Within these years the Gospel had been planted, and Christian Churches organized, and numberless office bearers ordained, and Church courts constituted

[1] Acts, xxi. 17–25 ; Gal., iii. *passim.*

in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and in Samaria, and according to the order prescribed by Christ; and the work for all the world which was to follow, had already spread widely. The very question of Gentile circumcision, to which I have already alluded, was decided, by a synod of Apostles and Elders, before which Paul and Barnabas and certain other men appeared to represent the Churches of Antioch. Already the government of the Church was fully in operation, already its office bearers were determined and established everywhere, before a Gentile idea had found entrance into its bosom, or those grand and long descended ideas of God's intimate power and personal presence, had changed even their colouring in the Jewish mind. Nay, when we enter this Christian tribunal which determined this question, in which was involved the fate of the Church and of the Gentile world; the very name of the office bearers carries us back to Moses, back to the Patriarchs. Elders, who were rulers always, since God had a Church visible on earth, whose title was always familiar where God had a people: Elders sit, counsel, decide, with the Apostles.[1] And it may be added that this great tribunal of Apostles and Elders, citing the example of Moses, reduced their decrees to writing that they might be read everywhere, and sent them to Antioch by Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren, and chosen men of their own company, along with Paul and Barnabas. These written decrees, received with great joy by the multitude of brethren in Antioch, were delivered by Paul himself, accompanied by Timothy, to all the Churches in the cities scattered throughout Syria and Cilicia, Phrygia and Galatia, as decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the Apostles and Elders which were at Jerusalem;[2] which service immediately preceded his first entrance with the blessed Gospel, upon the continent of Europe, about the twentieth year after the crucifixion.

4. Here then are the two objects of our enquiry, set palpably before us by the divine record; office bearers, and a government in their hands. Concerning the government itself, the most important and fundamental truths lie on the face of the narrative. It is a government whose authority extends over the whole

[1] Gen., l. 7; Ex., iii. 16–18; iv. 29–31; Lev., iv. 13–21; Numb., xi. 24–31; Psalm cvii. 32; Joel, i. 14, 15; ii. 15–17; Matt., xvi. 21; xxvii. 12; xxviii. 12; Acts, xi. 29, 30; xiv. 23; xv. *passim*; xvi. 4.

[2] Acts, xv. 19–22, 30–41; xvi. 1–9.

Christian world. It is a tribunal whose decision has been sought by the remote Churches of a great Gentile city; which being convened, accepts the reference to it without hesitation, and deliberates on the question as one proper for it to determine; which renders its authoritative decision in writing, and sends that decision in the form of a decree to the Churches immediately concerned. The same written decree is immediately circulated throughout all the surrounding nations, the great Apostle of the Gentiles who had brought the question to the supreme tribunal, being conspicuously active in delivering it to the scattered Churches in many States of the East; and it was everywhere delivered, everywhere received, as a decree ordained, and as such to be kept; ordained by the Apostles and Elders who convened at Jerusalem, to be kept throughout the Christian Church. It had been determined long before, in the great case at Cæsarea, that Gentiles may be baptized: but the manner of that decision is not formally recorded.[1] Now it must be decided, and the conduct of Peter himself at Antioch, and the supposed scruples of James, and the teaching of certain men who came from Judea to Antioch, obliged the Church to settle, whether or not a Gentile, even though baptized, can be saved except he be circumcised after the manner of Moses.[2] And the Church by its highest tribunal does settle it, and the Church through all her borders receives it as settled, and all succeeding ages accept the settlement, that day made at Jerusalem; that there never was such a Christian doctrine, as that a Gentile could not be saved unless he kept the law of Moses. We do not know precisely, how many Apostles sat in this Church court; all, doubtless, who were at Jerusalem. Certainly Peter, who after much disputing by others, delivered his brief and massive decision, ending with the words, We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they. James also sat in the body; and after hearing all, stated his judgment briefly, closing it with these words, My sentence is that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles are turned unto God. Paul and Barnabas were probably members of the synod; at any rate they urged it to the conclusion it reached, by declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. As for the Elders present, we know only that Barnabas and Silas were two; and that

[1] Acts, xi. 1–18.

[2] Gal., ii. 11–14; Acts, xv. 1, 2.

the number of them was so great, as to be called a multitude. The argument of Peter was, that this question had already been decided by God, and that it was merely to tempt him, to treat it otherwise. The argument of James was, that the prophets had foretold the call of the Gentiles; and that Peter's statement was in accordance with their predictions. The argument of Paul and Barnabas was, the actual miraculous demonstration of the will of God. The result reached was unanimous, joyful, also, not only to the Apostles and Elders, but to the brethren also, nay, to the whole Church. Let it be added, that everything that was said and done, avowed or assumed that they were acting by, and under, the authority of God, seeking to know his will, and when known to enforce it; all has express reference to Jesus; and the formal conclusion is, It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us[1]. I forbear to urge farther, that the court decreed as well what the Gentile Church must do, as what they need not do; the very form of their words, —To lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things, —showing the sense they had of the power of the synod, and of the force of its decrees. But let us note in addition to what has been said, that this tribunal had obviously no connection with any authority civil or sacred, either of the Jewish people or of the Roman Empire; that it was manifestly constituted of a single body made up of Apostles and Elders, not of two chambers or houses, of which Apostles composed one and Elders the other; that according to all the intimations of the narrative, as well as all the probabilities of the case, the number of Elders present far exceeded the number of Apostles present; that as members of this synod, the right to sit, to deliberate, and to decide, was equally complete in both classes of its members; and, finally, that a clear and decisive example of this sort, in which James, and Peter, and Paul were the chief actors, and such fellow labourers as Barnabas, and Barsabas, and Silas took part, and the body of Elders, at Jerusalem sat as members, and the whole Church of Christ approved, and the Holy Ghost endorsed: must be considered conclusive. Conclusive that there was a government in the Christian Church in the days of the Apostles; that it was in the hands of the Apostles and Elders; that it was independent of all human authority, coextensive with the whole Church, and had jurisdiction of the doctrine, the practice, the life, and

[1] Acts, xv. 1–29.

the interest of the whole body considered as a spiritual society ; and that the whole was in the name, and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. Leaving out the parts of the case which were miraculous, extraordinary, local and transitory, the grand and permanent truths which were settled by means of those elements, remain perpetually. The government by tribunals, the Elders, the jurisdiction, the multitudinous congregations, the unity of the whole Church, the supremacy over all of the tribunal which embraces all, the exclusive spirituality, complete separation from the world, and absolute authority of Christ : all this abides, and has been constantly manifest in the Gospel Church, exactly in proportion to its own fidelity to its divine Lord.

5. So far concerning the Government : next, briefly, concerning the office bearers in whose hands it is : and of the two classes, the Apostles first. The Saviour near the commencement of his public ministry, chose twelve of his disciples, who received the name of Apostles, to be his constant companions. One of them betrayed him, and then hanged himself. The hundred and twenty Disciples who met in Jerusalem, chose another in his place, sometime between the final ascension of the risen Saviour and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost. It is admitted on all hands, that the glorified Redeemer miraculously added Paul to the company ; and many suppose that Barnabas was also of the number. Some allege that others, perhaps many others, were also Apostles ; about which I shall not enquire here, as it is not material to the matter before us. Whoever were true Apostles of the Lord, had, of course, Apostolic power, rights, and fitness, divinely bestowed on them. For they were persons expressly and individually chosen by Christ, to be witnesses for him, concerning his life, his miracles, his doctrine, his crucifixion, his resurrection, and his glory ; expressly chosen to preach his gospel of salvation and cause it to be preached, to the whole family of man ; and to make known and cause to be made known in all nations, always, even unto the end of the world, all things whatsoever he had commanded them. To these men, even during his own ministry, he gave miraculous powers, and bade them freely use them, in confirmation of all he bade them preach.[1] He appointed unto them a kingdom, even as his Father had appointed unto him ;[2] he gave them unlimited authority to set it

[1] Matt., x. *passim*.

[2] Luke, xxii. 24–30.

up and to establish it—to open and to shut it—to form and to administer it :[1] he promised and he sent the Holy Ghost upon them, to fit them every way for their divine work, both by his ordinary and extraordinary work with and in them, and by his continual work as the Comforter of all those who should believe on him, and as the Reprover of the world itself :[2] and to crown all, he promised to be with them himself in the plenitude of his infinite power, always, everywhere, and to return again, personally and in boundless glory, when the dispensation of his kingdom committed to their hands, had reached the point for his second coming, then hidden in the bosom of the Father.[3] These are the men, three of whom certainly, and possibly more, were connected with the synod whose nature has just been considered ; to which, by their participation and approbation, they gave, both as to its substance and its form, its nature, organization, and acts, the whole weight of Apostolical, that is of divine authority. It is not, however, disputed by any, that the Apostles were completely authorized and fitted to create a government for the Gospel Church ; nor that whatever government they did create, was in their hands, wholly or in part. That Elders had part with them in the government they actually established, is as indisputable as the divine record. So that even if the Apostolic office is permanent in the Gospel Church, the exclusion of Elders from this participation with the Apostles, now existing, would be a gross impiety. For if no such Elders exist to share the government of the Church with these living Apostles, according to the manner ordained by God ; this is an immense and impious revolution. But if such Elders do exist, and are excluded by these living Apostles, this is an atrocious usurpation and tyranny united. If added to one or both of these outrages, these living Apostles are mere intruders into an office that has no longer any existence, then whatever government may be in their hands, is doubly impious; for it exists by first dispossessing those to whom it rightly appertains, and then giving it to those who are guilty of imposture even in what they pretend to be. After that, it was natural to ravage and pollute the Church which had been betrayed—to deny and insult the Saviour who had been

[1] Mark, xvi. 13–21 ; xviii. 15–20 ; John, xx. 19–25.

[2] Acts, i. 8 ; ii. *passim ;* x. *passim ;* Luke, xxiv. 44–53 ; John, xiv. ; xv. ; xvi.

[3] Acts, i. 1–11 ; Matt., xxviii. 18–20 ; xxv. 31–46 ; xxiv. 36–41 · Mark, xiii. 32–37.

defied. That the Apostolical office was extraordinary, and never designed by Christ to be permanent in the Church, is every way clear: and even if it were not, it is every way clear that those now claiming to be Apostles, are impostors. Because, if they are Apostles they must be so either by a lawful vocation of the people of God, like other permanent office bearers, which vocation none of them have, or even pretend to have: or they must be so by official succession from the original Apostles, which none of them can produce the slightest evidence that they possess, and which it can be clearly shown it is historically impossible that they should possess: or they must be so by miraculous vocation of God, to assert which, besides the imposture of it, is, considering whom they are, equally an insult to the common sense of men, and to the majesty of God. But, in effect, the Apostolic office had no such succession as is alleged: because whatever succession appertains to the Church is not by office bearers but by the Church itself, which is the Body of him who is the ruler of the universe. By the vocation of God, ascertained in the manner I will disclose, the permanent offices ordained of God, are filled from age to age. No perpetual succession appertains to the Church itself, in any other sense than that God has always had, and always will have, a Church in this world; but where, amongst what people, and how connected with preceding generations under the Gospel dispensation, is matter of sovereign grace, and not of succession. Moreover the very nature of the Apostolic office, namely, with plenary power and fitness to set up and establish a new dispensation of the Church of God; makes it as obvious that Peter had no successor, as that Abraham had none, and that Moses had none. And every Apostolic duty is of that nature, that it requires for its discharge such extraordinary operations of the Holy Ghost, as have ceased from the Church for nearly eighteen centuries: and the Scriptures are not only profoundly silent touching any continuance of this office permanently in the Church, but they assert that impostors calling themselves Apostles will arise, and command us to reject them, and praise those who had already before the death of the last Apostle, tried some of them and found them liars.[1] If however, there could be any doubt to any sincere enquirer after truth—the word of God has laid down three marks of a true

[1] Rev., ii. 2; 1 John, iv. 1; Matt., xxiv. 3–5, 25, 26.

Apostle, by the union of all of which he who claims to be one, must make that claim good. First, an Apostle must be a true lover of the Lord Jesus, and his faithful disciple in good report and ill report.[1] Secondly, he must be able to verify his claim by working miracles.[2] Thirdly, he must have personally seen the Lord Jesus, so as to be personally, and of his own knowledge, a witness of his resurrection.[3] If now it be alleged, that inasmuch as the government was in the hands of Apostles and Elders, the ceasing of the Apostolic office would abolish the government, by putting an end to the chief element of it; the answer is very easy. The government, whatever it might be, was created by the Apostles; that they took part in its administration during their lives, has been proved; that they intended to perpetuate the Apostolic office, has been disproved: the two remaining solutions are, first that they designed the government to be temporary and to cease with their office—which is absurd in itself, and wholly unsupported by the word of God; and secondly, that they designed the permanent government of the Church to be by courts composed exclusively of Elders. This is precisely what they did intend, and what they actually did: which I will prove in its place. The Greek words for these Elders and those courts composed of them, are as nearly as possible, transferred into English, in the ordinary words used to express them. The permanent government of the Church is by *Presbytery*, composed of *Presbyters*.* That the Apostles should take part in the administration of this government formed by themselves, designed to be perpetual and universal, rapidly extending itself over every quarter of the earth, and embracing Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles, a vast heterogeneous multitude of peoples, differing in all things but their common discipleship to Jesus; seems to me to offer the only assurance of its successful establishment, unless the first generation of believers had all been inspired. That their office justified what they did, can hardly be questioned. If it should be questioned, however, it could avail nothing, because it would be further necessary to show that the Apostolic office was inconsistent not only with such a use of it, but also inconsistent with the actual holding of

[1] John, xxi. 14–17; Luke, xxii. 25–29.

[2] Acts, ii. 42; Rom., xv. 16–20; 2 Cor., xii. 11–13.

[3] Acts, i. 8, 21–26; iv. 33; John, xv. 26, 27; 1 Cor., xv. 1–10; ix. 1, 2.

* Πρεσβυτεριον—πρεσβυτερος.

the additional office of Elder at the same time. But that never can be shown; for two at least amongst the most eminent of them, have declared that they were Elders themselves; and all may have been. Peter says, The Elders which are amongst you I exhort, who am also an Elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed.[1] John commences two of his Epistles by calling himself, The Elder.[2] For my own part, however, I consider it past dispute that the Apostolic office embraced unlimited Church power; and nothing can be more certain, than that the Apostles exercised it all, from the highest to the lowest.

6. I will now examine the nature of the office held by the Elders who, along with the Apostles, constituted the synod met at Jerusalem, which has been examined. As in the preceding portions of this enquiry, so here a clear case made and stated through divine inspiration, shall guide us. If any one ever knew what a Christian Elder was, the Apostle Peter certainly did. His First General Epistle, towards the close of his eventful and glorious life, is thus dedicated, Peter an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; Grace unto you and peace be multiplied. In the latter part of this Epistle he addresses the Elders of these widely scattered saints, and equally all the Elders on earth to the end of time, in the manner following: The Elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an Elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.[3] These statements hardly admit of being misunderstood. The predominant ideas are, the chief Shepherd, his flock, and the office bearers specially exhorted: it is Christ, and his widely scattered Church, and his under-Shepherds who are her Elders. This flock of Christ are called the elect of God, they are said to be redeemed by

[1] 1 Peter, iv. 1. [2] 2 John, 1; 3 John, 1. [3] 1 Peter, i. 1, 2; v. 1–3.

Christ, to be sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and to walk in new obedience: they are the flock of God, the heritage of God, Christ being the chief Shepherd, and the officers whom Peter exhorts being, according to the force and sense of the terms he uses, Elders, that is Presbyters of the flock, a title shared with Peter, Shepherds of it, a title shared with Christ, and as such Bishops of it, teachers of it and rulers of it under the great Teacher, the great King Jesus. They feed the flock; they have the oversight of the flock; they are its teachers, its rulers, its pastors, its bishops, all under the one name—Elders.* They were not appointed of God to lord it over his heritage, but to be examples to his flock. They must not take the oversight of it through any constraint upon the flock, but by its willing consent: the great doctrine of Vocation. They must not enter upon this work for filthy lucre, but from zeal. And the second coming of the Lord, and their crown of unfading glory to be received at that time, are the motives suggested for their fidelity. If, therefore, we may rely upon this Apostle, a Christian Elder, to whom the permanent administration of the government of the Christian Church belongs, is a Presbyter, who by his connection with the flock is Pastor and Bishop, and whose functions are to teach and rule; who is forbidden to lord it over the flock, or even to intrude into it, but is commanded to be an example to it. Peter's words do not admit of any other sense: and what he teaches corresponds with everything taught elsewhere by the Holy Ghost: insomuch that it may be confidently asserted not an intimation can be found throughout the Scriptures, that any one who is not a Presbyter, has any power of rule, since the Apostolic office ceased, in the Gospel Church. His generic title is Presbyter—Elder—which is specifically significative of his power of rule; and the officer, the idea, and the mode of expressing both, according to the various tongues, have been a part of the inheritance of the Church of God under every dispensation, since it had a visible existence. Being Presbyter he is ruler; having the cure of souls he is Bishop; having charge of a particular flock he is Pastor and Teacher. Thus, to take another example from another Apostle, Paul as he went up to Jerusalem, probably for the last time, passing from Macedonia, touched at Miletus, in Asia Minor, and sent to Ephesus and called the Elders of the

* *Πρεσβυτερους—ποιμανατε—ποιμνιον—επισκοπουντες—αοχιποιμενος.*

Church. His exhortation to them is preserved in the narrative of the affecting transaction ; in the course of which he spoke these words to them : Take heed therefore to yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he has purchased with his blood.[1] Now, here is a congregation of believers at Ephesus, whom God had purchased with his own blood, to the aggregate body of whom Paul applies two Greek words, translated by the two English words church and flock.* The persons he sent for, are described by two Greek phrases, one of which is rendered by the words, the Elders of Church, the word for Elder being the only Greek word for Presbyter ; and the other is rendered by the words, the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, the word for overseer being the only Greek word for Bishop.† The charge he gives them is, to take heed to themselves and to all the flock, and to feed the Church of God. We learn, therefore, the same things from Paul, as before from Peter. God had a Church in Ephesus, which, like all his other Churches, had office bearers in it, called Elders or Presbyters, who were Overseers or Bishops, who were placed by the Holy Ghost over this flock or Church to take care of it, and feed it ; that is, to be its Pastors, Bishops, Teachers, Rulers. Without multiplying proofs of what seems to be made clear and certain—namely, the nature of the office held by these Elders ; I will add one great and permanent peculiarity of the office, not disclosed particularly in the passages I have cited, but involved in them, and necessary to be clearly understood. The Jewish Sanhedrim, called in Greek *Sunedrion* (Συνεδριον) and in English Synod, was established by Moses by the express command of God, in the hands of seventy of the Elders of Israel ;[2] and existed throughout the Jewish dispensation as the supreme tribunal, both civil and ecclesiastical ; being in full exercise during the ministry of Christ and his Apostles, till the total destruction of the Jewish commonwealth. In the times of our Saviour and his Apostles, the chief priests and scribes sat in this body with the Elders, who were still its chief element :[3] the whole matter, though frequently alluded to, being unnecessarily obscured in our version by using the word *council*, instead of

[1] Acts, xx. 17, 28.

* Εκλησια—ποιμνιον.

† Τους πρεσβυτερους εκκλησιας ;—εν ω υμας το πνευμα το αγιον εθετο επισκοπους.

[2] Lev., xi. 16–30

[3] Matt., xxvi. 29 ; Luke, xxii. 66.

synod. In the body of the Christian Elders, from their first existence, all without exception were rulers, as I have proved. But a new function manifested itself amongst these Elders, unknown to those of the Jews ; the great function of preaching the cross of Christ, as the power of God, and of a divine stewardship of those mysteries of God which stand immediately related to the great work of proclaiming the Gospel to every creature. To meet this glorious exigency, many expedients presented themselves. The one adopted by the Apostles was the simplest and the most effectual. The whole body of Elders was divided upon this new function into two classes, one of which should perform it in addition to all other functions, and the other should unite with them as before in the performance of all other functions of the Elder's office. The designation of individual Elders to one or other class, as well as the call of them all, might at first have been miraculous, or might have been personal by the Apostles as theirs had been by Christ. Permanently, it must all be through vocation of God's people, and by ordination ; the fact of such a distinction as I have pointed out, being the main thing here. The dispensation of Sacrifices had ended, and with it the ceremonial law on one side, and on the other the order of the priesthood, the essence of whose office it was to offer sacrifice. But the Church stood not only, but passed into a far higher state ; and every permanent gift which God had bestowed on her, from the foundation of the world, stood forth only the more distinctly as all that was temporary disappeared. The Elders of the people were one of these gifts, older than the call of Moses, which he found and by the command of God organized ; which the Apostles found, and in like manner organized, as I have shown ; in all instances the form of organization being responsive to the form of each successive dispensation. In the Gospel dispensation, Church power is subject to the profound distinction which both the examples I have just expounded involve and suggest, namely the distinction between ruling and teaching : which distinction in the power, must exist also in those who hold the power ; or else all of them must hold both forms of Church power, and the inherent distinction in the nature of the power be liable to constant disregard. In effect, what happens by the ordination of God is, that the distinction in the nature of the power is preserved, and the whole body of Elders is divided into two classes,

of whom one hath rulers and teachers, while the others rule only ; all being by order Elders—Presbyters. Therefore, says the Apostle, Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they that labour in word and doctrine.[1] That is, all Elders are Church rulers, and all as such should be honoured ; and those who do this duty well should receive special honour on that account : but besides ruling well, there are Elders who preach the Gospel, and these are particularly worthy of being honoured. In the same chapter the Apostle charges Timothy, to whom he was writing, that he should not rebuke an Elder, but exhort him as a father ; and that, on the other hand, in ordaining Elders in every city, to whom should be committed, that they also might commit to others, the things in which Paul had instructed him ; hands must not be laid in ordination suddenly on any man.[2] In another epistle this Apostle, more in detail, commands generally that every one having any part in the service of the body of Christ, should diligently use his special office, received as a gift of the grace of God ; and then entering into particulars, commands among other things that those who are thus called of God to teach shall be occupied therein, and those who are called to rule shall do it diligently.[3] And to this purport is the whole doctrine of the subject, whether the Christian Church be considered in its relation to past dispensations, or in its own special nature ; whether we examine the revealed form of the government given to it, or the absolute nature of the office bearers themselves, or the multitudinous statements relating expressly or indirectly to every part of the subject, scattered throughout the word of God. Touching the point I have now discussed, the result is certain ; namely, that the permanent government of the Gospel Church is exclusively in the hands of Elders, and that there are two classes of Elders, of whom one are both teachers and rulers, and the other rulers only.

II.—1. There is then, by divine ordination, a spiritual government in the Gospel Church, wholly distinct from all civil government : the office bearers in whose hands this government is lodged by God, are revealed : and the nature of the power of the Church, to be exercised through this government, and these office bearers, is taught us by God. I will now endeavour to ex-

[1] 1 Tim., v. 17.

[2] 1 Tim., v. 1–22 ; 2 Tim., ii. 2 ; Titus, i. 5.

[3] Rom., xii. 4–8.

plain, from the word of God, as briefly as possible, the manner in which this government originates and takes its divine form, in which it acts, and in which its existence is every way involved with that of the visible Church itself. And first of the particular congregations and their tribunal. We have no means of knowing to what extent men were regenerated under the personal ministry of Christ; no means of ascertaining what proportion of the seed of Abraham, were already true children of God when Christ came, and joyfully received him as soon as he appeared. When we recollect that the Jewish people were the visible Church of God, and that the profession of being a Jew which was only outward and not inward, is distinctly repudiated by Christ and by the Apostles; and call to mind the signal examples mentioned in the New Testament, of righteous Jews who were waiting, when Christ appeared, for the hope of Israel; we shall, perhaps justly, conclude that we are prone to make too low an estimate of the number of God's children who were ready to accept their Messiah. On the other point, if we call to mind the wonderful ministry of John the Baptist, and its wonderful effects; and reflect on the overwhelming power of the teaching, the miracles, and the very presence of Christ, and consider what vast multitudes throughout Judea heard his doctrine from himself, as well as from the twelve, and the seventy whom he sent out; it is not easy to believe that the number of true believers was small, when the Lord was crucified. We know that the number of the disciples met together in one place before Pentecost, who at the suggestion of Peter substituted an Apostle for Judas, was about a hundred and twenty;[1] they being, probably, a select body of the principal Christians then about Jerusalem. And Paul states that Christ was seen after his resurrection, by about five hundred brethren at once; although Peter says it was only by witnesses chosen before of God, that he was seen after his resurrection.[2] To this precious, dispersed, and perhaps great flock delivered by Christ to the Apostles, three thousand were added on the day of Pentecost. The number was increased to five thousand a short time after, and the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved; and in a single generation the Gospel seems to have penetrated the remotest nations. At first, the Apostles appear to have discharged every official duty; very soon they caused

[1] Acts, i. 15.

[2] 1 Cor., xv. 6; Acts, x. 41.

the multitude of the disciples in Jerusalem to elect Deacons; as soon as we hear of particular Churches, we hear of their Elders: and then of Presbytery, and ordinations; and then of Synod, and great questions discussed and settled. The office bearers of the Church, are ascension gifts of Christ; for, it is certain that when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men; which gifts were Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. And these were given, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.[1] And so far were the Apostles from being at any loss, that the narrative of their reception of the Holy Ghost, of their instantaneous proclamation of salvation by Jesus Christ, of the conversion and immediate baptism of about three thousand souls; proceeds to add that these persons continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer.[2] But this breaking of bread was the celebration of the Lord's Supper, which has been shown to be a sacrament involving a community, and not merely individual persons: and this fellowship* necessarily involves the same thing. From Pentecost itself, therefore, the family of Christ, the Church, the Christian commonwealth, already existed in its visible form; and was numbered by thousands; possibly, as I have pointed out, by hundreds of thousands. From the remotest antiquity perhaps, undoubtedly from the Babylonish captivity, fixed congregations of believers met to worship God. The Jews called these fixed congregations synagogues, and held the worship of each at a fixed place; and that worship consisted in the reading and expounding of God's word, and in offering up prayers to him. Each one of these synagogues had a bench of these Elders, whom the Scriptures mention so often, who jointly bore rule in it. During the ministry of Christ and that of his Apostles, these synagogues existed throughout Palestine, and were found in every city in the world, wherever a small community of Jews resided. If the Rabbis are to be credited, Jerusalem contained nearly five hundred synagogues. Every Christian in the world, probably, for the first eight years of the existence of the Gospel Church, was a Jew: and whether by divine inspiration, by reason of the perfection of the organization, by reason of their Jewish training, or by reason of all combined; the fact is certain that the fixed congregations,

[1] Eph., iv. 7–15; 1 Cor., xii. 5–13. [2] Acts, ii. 42. * Κοινωνια.

the particular Churches, which the Apostles erected in the bosom of the Church universal, were as near the model of the Jewish synagogue as the respective natures of the two dispensations of the Church of God allowed. The Apostle James, indeed, calls the Christian congregation of his dispersed brethren to whom his Epistle is addressed, your synagogue, which our version obscures by using the word assembly.[1] And the promise of our Saviour, Where two or three are gathered together* in my name, there am I in the midst of them :[2] appears, from the peculiar word he used, to intimate an organic gathering together, and that after the manner of the synagogue. Now these fixed Christian congregations are the elemental particulars of which the whole structure of Church government is constructed. To each one of these Christ gives a plurality of Elders, two or three, ten or twenty, according to its need. To each one of them he gives a Pastor or Bishop—or two or three or more, if need require. And all these Pastors, Bishops and Elders, are alike Presbyters ; and all jointly rule, and the Pastors or Bishops besides this, labour in word and doctrine. The tribunal, the court in that congregation, which exercises all the power of rule appertaining to it, is constituted of all these Presbyters.[3] To this fixed particular Church, God gave another class of permanent office bearers called Deacons, of whom I have had no occasion to speak particularly as yet, because Church government is not in their hands. They are mentioned here for the purpose of adding, that every complete Christian Church, has everything that every other one has, everything that the Church universal has : Pastors, Elders, Deacons, members, a tribunal, ordinances, worship, everything. If there was but one on earth it would possess all that the universal Church would possess, if it embraced the whole family of man : numbers only would be increased, the government, the office bearers, the members, the tribunal, the nature of Church power being the same. On the one hand the unity of the whole Church, on the other the efficacy of every particular element of it, is perfectly secured : and all that is lacking is some application of this wonderful organization, by which a tribunal like that in the congregation, shall exist for the whole of the Church considered as one, and tri-

[1] James, ii. 2. * Συνηγμενοι [2] Matt., xviii. 20.

[3] 1 Cor., v. 4, 5 ; xii. 28 ; Matt., xviii. 15-20 ; Acts, xiv. 23 ; 1 Thess., v. 11, 12 ; Acts, xv. 2, 6 ; xx. 17, 28 ; Rom., xii. 8 ; 1 Tim., v. 17.

bunals like both of these shall exist between the first and the last, the smallest and the greatest, as necessity may demand. This I will now explain.

2. The particular Christian congregations everywhere gathered and organized, everywhere called the Church, the flock of Christ, of which the mention is constant in those divine writings which cover a period of about sixty years, from the crucifixion of Christ to the death of the Apostle John ; varied greatly with respect to members, both one from another, and each one in itself from time to time. The organized congregation and its tribunal, might exist singly in a city and be small : or might exist singly, and the numbers be so great and the city so large, as to require numerous places for public worship, and numerous office bearers to serve, to rule, and to teach, so great a multitude : or each one of these various meetings might become fixed and organized with its own officers and tribunal. It is an aspect of the subject which presents no difficulty, either in theory or practice. That Presbyters, Elders, Pastors, Bishops, were ordained in every Church, by the Apostles or by their orders, is explicitly and repeatedly asserted in the Scriptures ;[1] and I have already shown that they constituted the tribunal, the court—the congregational or parochial Presbytery. It is by the union of many of these particular congregations, with their tribunals, and by the erection of a tribunal over the united body, similar to the one that exists in each of them ; that the Church preserves its outward unity, and extends its government, as its own area enlarges, and its numbers increase. It is immaterial what the number of these united congregations may be, three, a hundred, or any convenient number. The model of this application of the principles of the government, already existed from the origin of the Church, probably in every large city, certainly in Jerusalem, Antioch and others ; where numerous unfixed congregations, although worshipping statedly apart, belonged for a time to the same organized Church, under the control of its single but numerous tribunal. So that the transition to a similar union of numerous fixed and organized congregations, and the erection of a tribunal over them all which should be exactly like the tribunal of each, indeed constituted by uniting the whole of the particular tribunals or a select portion of each one ; was a perfectly obvious mode by which the united

[1] Acts, xiv. 23 ; xiii. 1–3 ; xxi. 17, 18 ; 1 Tim., v. 17–22 ; Titus, i. 5 ; James, v. 14.

congregations might have mutual counsel and assistance, might more effectually preserve the doctrine and execute the discipline of the Church, might preserve the organic unity of the whole as the body of Christ of which all are parts, and might augment by union of counsel and effort the efficient working of the whole, in perfecting and extending the Kingdom of God. What is asserted is, that this part of the organization of the Church, which seems to be so natural, so obvious, and so wise, is also Apostolical and divine ; that this union of congregations is as thoroughly according to the will of God, as the union of individuals into congregations is ; and the control of the tribunal of the united congregations as real over all the congregations and all their special tribunals, as the rule of each particular tribunal is over the congregation in which it is erected. Thus originating and thus constituted, the members of this tribunal are the same persons who are members of the tribunals in the congregations ; not only similar, but the same, beyond all doubt to the extent of embracing them ; they are Presbyters of both classes, all of one order, and according to that order all of equal dignity, rank, and authority, as rulers in the house of God. The tribunal itself is called in the Greek Scriptures Presbuterion (*Πρεσβυτεριον*) Presbytery : the very same word being applied by Paul to the Jewish and to the corresponding Christian tribunal ; but obscured by rendering it the Estate of the Elders when applied to the former.[1] So we have in the Jewish Church the Sanhedrim, the Presbytery, and the Synagogue, and in the Christian Church the Synod, the Presbytery, and the congregation : the very names of all the Jewish courts being allowed by the Apostles, as being appropriate to the Christian institutions ; and the things represented by these names respectively, being as similar as the difference between the two dispensations permits. It would prevent much error, if we would more carefully distinguish between those parts of our great inheritance which are peculiar to our own dispensation, and those parts which are common to all dispensations. For the detailed exposition of the three ecclesiastical tribunals so nearly common to the Jewish and Christian Dispensations, a volume, and not a single section of a single chapter, would be required. I therefore content myself, upon this naked point of the divine warrant for the classical Presbytery, that is a Presbytery over a

[1] 1 Tim., iv. 14; Acts, xxii. 5; Luke, xxii. 66.

class of particular Churches, which is the tribunal next above the congregational Presbytery or Church session ; with merely adding to what has been advanced, the example of the classical Presbytery in the Churches in Jerusalem, in Antioch, in Ephesus, and in Corinth ;[1] concerning all of which the numerous statements of the Scriptures, when collected and duly considered, make it fully apparent that they were just such courts as have existed always, and as exist still, in the Church of Christ. Supposing, in the next place, the Church visible to extend itself beyond such limits, either in space or numbers, as may be conveniently covered by the classical Presbytery just described ; the formation of additional tribunals of the same kind, either by division of such as exist, or the erection of new ones, puts these classical Presbyteries with all the Churches composing them, in a position similar to that occupied by the particular Churches and their congregational Presbytery, before the creation of the classical Presbytery. And the remedy and the result are the same, as in the first case. The union of any number of classical Presbyteries as such, three, fifty, a hundred, creates a synod covering them all ; composed of the same office bearers, organized in the same way, and with the same power and jurisdiction over all, that each had over part. By taking the members of this third court, or synod, immediately from the first one, or Church session, it may be made a very numerous body ; or by taking them from the second court, or Presbytery strictly so called, and applying the principle of representation of the whole Presbytery by a small part of its members, the synod may be a very small body. It is perfectly suitable, therefore, either to be the permanent head of a denomination of Christians, or of a national Church ; or to be one of a series of tribunals, the supreme one of which shall be above it. The scriptural warrant for this tribunal has been as fully set forth, and its nature as fully considered, in the examination I have already made of the synod constituted at Jerusalem concerning Gentile circumcision, as my limits permit. And now supposing the extent of the Church in any way, or its interests of any sort, to demand a tribunal still higher than the synod, the same divine organization and principles apply perfectly, and with the same result : and a uni-

[1] Acts, xi. 27, 30 ; xv. 2, 35 ; xiii. 1–3 ; xx. 17, 28 ; iv. 35, 37 ; vi. 2, 3–6 ; 1 Cor., i. 12 ; iv. 15 ; v. 4–15 ; xiv 29 ; 2 Cor., ii. 6–9.

versal council of any number of Churches, can be constituted for a special purpose; or a General Assembly of any separate Church, whether denominational or national, can be constituted as a permanent tribunal, without departing in the least particular from the divine model, or from the divine precepts. If the General Assembly is to be numerous, that is effected by making the Presbyters who compose it, the representatives of Presbyteries: if it is to be comparatively small, that is effected by making the Presbyters who compose it the representatives of Synods. It is the tribunal of the whole Church; it is the whole Church met in one Assembly by its office bearers, exactly as a Church session is a particular Church met by its office bearers; and the jurisdiction and power of the supreme tribunal over all, are of the same nature and have the same divine warrant, as the jurisdiction and the power of the tribunals below it over the parts which they respectively rule. The government of the Church, therefore, is a free representative government: it is not a tyranny like popery, nor an oligarchy like Prelacy, nor a pure democracy like Independency. It is in its conception perfect, no matter how small: perfect, no matter how widely expanded: perfect at every intermediate point between a small company and the whole race of man. It cannot make Christians; but it enables Christians to do with the highest efficiency, all that God requires them to do, as his Kingdom. Its whole authority depends on the only head of the Church, who is Christ the Lord; in whose name every one of its tribunals perpetually constitutes; and all their lawful acts are worship of him. Its whole efficacy depends on the Holy Ghost, and its sole rule is the word of God. Its connection with the Church of God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, is so vital, that its permanent extinction is totally impossible, except by means of the annihilation of the visible Church. Nevertheless, while its existence depends on that of the Church, the existence of the Church depends on it only in the sense, that by the command of God she manifests the life he gives her, through the gifts he bestows on her; two of which are these office bearers, and this government in their hands. Great gifts: but she has others earlier and greater.

3. I have explained in another place, how it is that the inherent power of making laws, which in the nature of society manifests itself in the very process of its organic life; receives, in

this divine society, a very peculiar direction, and manifests itself by the willing, nay, joyful acceptance of God as its only law-giver, and his laws as the only laws of his Church. Obedience to the laws of God, together with the exposition and administration of them, therefore, embraces the whole power and duty of the government of that society called the visible Church. All its officers, and the whole government in their hands, and the entire tribunals appertaining to that government, are, as I have shown, from God, and of the Church. This Church is the company of God's elect now on earth, who are disciples of Jesus Christ, his visible Body, a peculiar people purified unto himself, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.[1] To it, God has given inestimable gifts, out of some of which its visible existence originated, and by means of others its complete organization has been produced ; and its continued existence and extension, as well as its peace, purity and edification are secured by them all. In a special manner the office bearers of the Gospel Church are ascension gifts of Christ to the Church in its present form ; and the government in their hands is of Christ, with special reference to this dispensation. Nor does it impair, but rather adds to the force of these statements, that the model of the office bearers and of the government of the Church, is found in part under preceding dispensations ; just as the Sabbath, the Sacraments, the moral law, the Gospel, nay, Christ himself, are found in them. The relation, therefore, between Christ, the Church, its office bearers, and its government, all to each, and each to every one, is unspeakably intimate ; and on that very account we are the more liable to err, in our weak attempts to apply the logical element of the question of the Church, in such a manner as to settle and bound acts and gifts of God, into which the supernatural element of the question of the Church enters so profoundly. Whatever power is in the Church or its office bearers, is in them by investiture from Christ, and is revealed in the sacred Scriptures. But the whole power of Christ unto salvation is in him, under the covenant of grace, and as Mediator of the Covenant ; and all his power unto salvation as Mediator, is manifested in his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King. Of his Priestly office, and power, he delegates nothing to the Church ; except as it is a Kingdom, every member of which is a royal Priest ; and except as that

[1] Titus, ii. 14 ; 1 Peter, ii. 9.

portion of its Presbyters who labour in word and doctrine, each being a minister of Christ, an Elder, a Bishop, a receiver of gifts, is a steward of the mysteries of God.*[1] Of his Kingly office he delegates to his Church, whatever power of rule he invests in the Elders he gives her, and in the government he creates in their hands. And of his Prophetic office he delegates in a wide sense power to every disciple of his, to spread the glad tidings of salvation through all the earth, and to make the way of life known to every creature ; but in a strict sense, he calls one class of the great order of Elders, and delegates to them the preaching of the everlasting Gospel, they being herein his special official servants, ministers, and stewards of the mysteries of God. The whole rule of the Church is, therefore, a delegation to a certain extent, of certain parts of the Kingly power of Christ ; and is in Elders as Elders, to be exercised by them in the tribunals ordained of God. But to a certain class of this order of Elders, the great function of the ministry in word and doctrine, and that of stewardship of the mysteries of God, is divinely committed ; and this is a delegation also, from Christ, and the most glorious of all, but a delegation not of his Kingly but of his Prophetic power as to the former, and of his Priestly power as to the latter. The rule of the Church, I repeat, is a delegation from Christ as King, and is in the hands of Elders met in tribunals ; the ministration of the Gospel is a delegation from Christ as Prophet, and is in the hands of ministers who are Elders ; and the stewardship of the mysteries of God is a delegation from Christ as Priest, and is in the hands of the ministers of the Gospel. The ministers of the Gospel, therefore, are rulers, not as ministers, nor as stewards, but as Elders, Presbyters ; Presbyters on whom those great additional honours are laid by God, and on account of those gifts and callings of God, they become a separate class of Elders, not by any means a different order. There is, therefore, as I said before, a thorough and obvious distinction in the nature of Church power itself ; which is ordinarly and justly expressed by calling one form of it, the power of rule, or government, *Potestas Regiminis;* and the other the power of teaching and of administering the mysteries, or from the nature of it, the power of order,

* Υπερητας Χριστου, και οικονομους μυστηριων θεου :—πρεσβυτερους—επισκοπον—θεου οικρνομον :—χαρισμα—οικονομοι—χαριτος θεου.

[1] 1 Cor., iv. 1 ; Titus, i. 4–7 ; 1 Peter, iv. 10, 11.

Potestas Ordinis. The distinction is fundamental; and the difference in the use and exercise of the two powers is also fundamental; and not only the freedom and efficiency of the Church, but its very nature as a society, depends on seeing that distinction clearly, and observing it faithfully. The power of order is a several power, never joint; the power of regimen, rule, is a joint power, never several. A Presbyter, who is a minister of Christ, labouring in word and doctrine and a steward of the mysteries of God; preaches the Gospel, administers sacraments, and the like, as a single person, *ex ordine*, by virtue of his being what he is; and nothing can be added to, nothing taken from the lawfulness and efficacy of such acts, by the absence or the concurrence of other office bearers like himself. As to his ruling, it is widely different. No Presbyter has any several power of rule; the power itself is joint, and can be exercised only by a tribunal, never by a single person, nor by any number of single persons taken severally. The exercise of rule in Christ's Church is not by the body of the brotherhood, nor by a diocesian Prelate, nor by a Pope; but exclusively by Church courts, constituted of both classes of the one great order of Presbyters. The tribunals they constitute are courts, not legislative assemblies: courts having power, in the name and by the authority of Christ the eternal King and Lawgiver and Judge, to expound and administer the laws of his Kingdom on earth; which laws embrace his whole will revealed unto salvation, as held forth in the Scriptures. And these courts, as has been shown, rise one above another, each embracing all below it, until that which is supreme embraces all. Everything has reference to the preservation and extension of the Kingdom; to the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life, to the end of the world. Everything has a divine authority: or no authority at all.

4 .In the practical continuance of the existence of the visible Church, and the practical administration of its government, and of all power whether that of Regimen or that of Order; everything depends upon the practical exercise of the vocation of office bearers. Theoretically, the subject is no less vital; for the grounds, no matter what they are, upon which we decide it, will be found to enter deeply into the whole conception we have of the nature of the Church, its office bearers, and its government. If the Pope or the King appoints the diocesan Bishops,

and they appoint the Priests, and the Elder's office is abolished; it is easily seen that the idea of the Church, of its government, of its officers, and of their vocation, is consistent throughout. On the other extreme, if the idea of the visible unity of the Church is swallowed up in the idea of the independence of each particular congregation, the brotherhood of which is the sole power in the Church of God; here again, the idea of the Church, of its government, of its office bearers, and of vocation, is consistent throughout. In both cases it is seen how much of what I have established, is destroyed; and they show, also, that there must be some idea of vocation of officers corresponding with the coherent system of the Church, its government, and office bearers, which I have explained. This I will briefly disclose. That God has always established whatever offices have lawfully existed in his Church, whether extraordinary or ordinary, and that, by consequence, none ever were or can be authorized except they are established by him; is, I suppose, already abundantly proved. The manner in which individual persons are to obtain a lawful right to these offices, established by God; is itself, also, ordained by God; but variously ordained under successive dispensations. Under the Jewish dispensation, none might be Priests but a legitimate male descendant of Aaron, nor he, except on certain conditions and in a certain way, ordained by God; and none might be High Priest, on the peril of his life, but male after male in a direct line from Aaron; so that when Aaron had but two sons, God made the perpetuity of the Jewish dispensation depend on this narrow point. Under the Gospel dispensation, the Apostles were chosen personally by Christ, and were anointed by the Holy Ghost, and their divine vocation attested by miracles. The offices and courts instituted by Christ, so far as the regimen and order are concerned, have been already sufficiently proved and explained. The personal vocation of each individual who occupies any office in the Gospel Church, is of God, both mediately and immediately. As to the latter, even Christ glorified not himself to be made a High Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee: as he saith, also, in another place, Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.[1] No man, therefore, may take this honour on himself, but he that is called like Aaron.[2] Called, not after the same or-

[1] Heb., v. 5, 6.

[2] Heb., v. 4; vii. 11; Ex., xxviii.; xxix.

der as Aaron, but as really called of God. This inward call of God by his Spirit, is the immediate vocation of God ; and every one who becomes an office bearer in the Church of Christ, is at least as much bound to have an inward and satisfying conviction that he is thus called of God to the work he undertakes, as every one who becomes a disciple of Christ is bound to have an inward and satisfying conviction that he is called thereunto by the Spirit of God. Of the two evils, it is more disastrous every way, to intrude into an office of the Church than merely into its membership ; and nothing can be more clear than that a body whose officers and members are alike destitute of the immediate calling of God's Spirit, is a synagogue of Satan. Whatever remains after this immediate vocation of God, is not mere prudential rules established by men, but is the mediate call of God ; the ordinances which he has established, whereby his Church may ascertain that he has really and immediately called the particular person, to the particular office. I will not deny that the Apostles might have justly exercised, in the vocation of the first permanent office bearers, powers equivalent to everything after the inward and immediate call of God. That they did nothing of this sort, however, may be fairly urged from the manner in which the first Deacons were chosen :[1] and I have before shown, that on the day of Pentecost, the doctrine, the ordinances, the œconomy, and the worship of the Church, are spoken of as already existing. At any rate there was the Church of Christ, whose vocation under two aspects, and at two stages, is that which constitutes the mediate call of God. No one is subject to be called to any office, who is not already a member of the body of Christ ; and the qualifications which every one must possess, before he can presume to say he has an inward vocation of God, and before the Church can lawfully call him to any office ; are plainly laid down concerning each office, in the sacred Scriptures.[2] Nor can any one be lawfully called to a permanent and ordinary office, except by the congregation he is to serve in the Lord ; nor can any office bearer be set in any office in a congregation, except by its own vocation. It is thus that God has guarded his Church against intruders and impostors. It is thus that the Bride of the

[1] Acts, vi. 1–7.

[2] Titus, i. 5–9; 1 Tim., iii. *passim* ; v. 17–25 ; 2 Tim., ii. 21–26 ; Eph., iv. 11–16 ; Acts vi. 31 ; i. 21–25 ; xvi. 1–3.

Lamb accepts the ascension gifts of her head and Lord. It is thus that ultimate power is lodged by Christ, in that royal priesthood which constitutes the holy nation, whereby the whole government of the Church takes its start in the bosom of the Christian congregation, and is perpetuated only by their perpetual action. And the highest fidelity in the exercise of this great and sacred trust is secured, by obliging each particular congregation to receive as its own office bearer, every one to whom its vocation is given. Nor is the mediate calling of God yet complete. This vocation of the Church attests, on one side, to him who supposes he has been called of God, and on the other side to the tribunal which God has appointed to ordain him to his office; her conviction that God has called him, and her readiness te accept him. Without this, I repeat, no Church court may lawfully ordain any one, to any ordinary and permanent office. But while the want of this seal of a divine vocation, is a defect which ordination cannot cure; the possession of it is not conclusive on the Church court. This tribunal, no matter which it is, is composed exclusively of office bearers who have received the vocation of God, outward and inward, mediate and immediate, to be rulers in the courts of the Lord; part of whom are always, besides, ministers who labour in word and doctrine. It is for this court of Christ, with the evidence of the vocation of God before them, which is furnished by the conviction of the person who seeks the office, and by the call of the Church ratifying it; to judge finally and by whatever other evidence, and under whatever other divine guidance, in this solemn and important matter. If there be persons competent to decide in such a case, these are they. If any motives, human or divine, can be supposed to secure a just and righteous decision, they exist here. If, on their souls, and as they will answer to Christ, they believe the Lord has called the person to the office; they ordain him to it, as Christ has provided, by an irrevocable act in his name, calling upon him by prayer, and with laying on of the hands of the Presbytery.[1] This, briefly, is the method pointed out by God for the perpetuation of office bearers, and a government in his Church. In a settled state of the Church, its operation is perfectly simple and efficacious. Once erected, all the knowledge,

[1] Titus, i. 5; 1 Tim., iv. 14–16; Gal., ii. 9; 2 Tim., i. 6; ii. 2; iv. 1, 2; Acts, vi. 6; i. 25; xiii. 2, 3; Ex., xl. 12–16; Num., viii. 9–11.

piety, and zeal it contains are always free to act, and are necessarily in perpetual conflict with whatever error, ignorance, or indifference may have gained entrance. The most difficult of all systems to derange, it possesses also in the highest degree of all, the forces which tend to readjustment. If by the most indiscriminate persecution it appears to be destroyed, the smallest fragment that escapes the rack and the stake, is capable of reproducing all. If by the rich grace of God, boundless extension is given to it, it might cover the whole world as easily as a single province. The conditions of its endless triumph are few but absolute : and I have demonstrated them all. Its Faith must be pure, its Life holy, its Worship acceptable to God.

III.—1. Amongst the permanent office bearers of the Church, who have the power of Regimen and Order, I have omitted any separate mention of Teacher as one of them; because it seems to me to be very obvious that a separate office for permanent teaching was never created by God in the Christian Church ; but the Elder who was the minister of the word and steward of the mysteries of God, was also teacher as well as Pastor of the flock, just as every Elder who had the cure of souls was bishop, overseer.[1] There was but one order of permanent Rulers, and they were all Presbyters, Elders, and as rulers all equal ; there was but one class of ministers of the word and doctrine, and they were all equal in rank and class, all Presbyters, Elders, to whom various names are given, according to the various functions they discharge, to teach being amongst the chief. Of the manifestly extraordinary orders of office bearers, Apostles and Prophets, to which perhaps teachers might be added, the former has been sufficiently considered ; and little need be said here concerning the latter. Very frequent mention is made of Prophets, and occasional mention of Teachers in the New Testament ; as of persons to whom the extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit of God were vouchsafed.[2] They are specially classed by the sacred writers with the Apostles, miraculous gifts, and miracles :[3] and the name Prophet is applied repeatedly, and with emphasis, to Christ himself.[4] As inspired teachers of the true sense of all former revelations from God, as inspired teachers of what Jesus himself had

[1] Eph., iv. 1; Rom., xii. 7; Gal., vi. 6

[2] Matt., x. 41; Acts, ii. 17; xi. 27; xiii. 1, 2; 1 Cor., xiv. 29–33.

[3] Rom., xii. 28–31; Eph., iii. 5. Matt., xiii. 57; xxi. 11, 46; Luke, xxiv. 19.

taught, as inspired men who made known to the disciples the will of God in the providences then existing or immediately impending, or revealed the more distant future; we easily see the relation they bore to Christ, to the Apostles, to the Church, and to the early spread of the Gospel among men. They appear to have had no connection with the government of the Church: and they ceased from it, when the extraordinary operations of the Spirit ceased. The warnings of God against false Prophets, are as emphatic and as suggestive as I have shown they are against false Apostles.[1]

2. There is another office bearer who is ordinary and permanent in the Church, whom I have not mentioned particularly, because he has no power of regimen or order, in the sense in which I have used these terms. I mean the Deacon, whose creation, qualifications, and duties, are explicitly stated in the Scriptures; and the election and ordination of the first seven Deacons, together with their names, in the Church of Jerusalem, are handed down to us.[2] The office thus created at Jerusalem, was introduced into the Church everywhere: and special honour seems to have been put on such as discharged the office well, while special care was taken to fill it only with men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, and wisdom.[3] These officers are servants of the Church, in things having more immediate relation to the manner in which Christianity affords a remedy or solace under temporal trials and sorrows; in like manner as the ministers of the word are servants of the Church, in things more entirely spiritual. Their Greek name, which is nearly transferred into English, is very widely applied in the Scriptures to many sorts of service, and many kinds of officers who performed them. But this affords no pretext for any mistake about this office; much less for the gross perversion of it; as equally appears, whether we consider the divine example so particularly given us, or the true relation of the service to be performed, whether to Christ himself or to the nature of his Kingdom. I will add a few words as to both. As to the former, nothing can be more precise. The twelve called the multitude of the disciples; that is they convened a Church meeting of the saints in Jerusalem, and desired them, for reasons

[1] Matt., vii. 15; xxiv. 11; 2 Peter, ii. 1; 1 John, iv. 1; Rev., xvi. 13; xix. 20; xx. 10.

[2] Acts, vi. 1–7.

[3] Phil., i. 1; Acts. vi. 3; 1 Tim., iii. 8–13.

given, to make a careful selection from among themselves of seven men of peculiar qualifications which are stated, whom the twelve would appoint over the things they desired to separate from their special work. The ministration being then constant and daily, decided the number recommended ;—seven, one for each day. The whole multitude being pleased, they chose, selected, elected, seven such members of the Church as the Apostles had described ; one of them was a proselyte—that is had been first a heathen and then a Jew—and the bulk of the others, apparently not natives of Judea ; whom they set before the Apostles ; and when they had prayed they laid hands on them. That is, they ordained them to be Deacons by prayer and the imposition of hands ; which is the way all ordinary office bearers were set apart to their office. The only matters about which the least uncertainty can exist, is who prayed and who laid on hands. Probably the Apostles did both ; probably the tribunal in that Church did both ; possibly the Apostles prayed, and the tribunal laid on hands, as the Greek text seems rather to indicate—and as all the congregation of Israel did when the Levites were consecrated.[1] The establishment of the office by the Apostles, and the ordination of the officers by prayer and the imposition of hands, in their presence and by their direction, together with the free election by the Church, and the full concurrence of whatever tribunal existed in it, and the peculiar qualifications, and future duties of the persons chosen : all these things are beyond question. Touching the other point, the general nature of the office of Deacon, and its relation on one side to Christ and his Church, and on the other to those temporal duties which the miseries and misfortunes of our fellow creatures and especially those of our brethren in Christ, lay Christians under : far more ought to be urged, than is suitable in this place. The New Obedience which we owe and profess to render to God, has for its rule the supreme love of him ; and the Good Works which are such fruits of it as relate chiefly to man, has for its rule the love of our neighbour as ourself. All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them ; for this is the law and prophets. And these words of Jesus are so enforced by his Apostles, that one tells us our faith is dead if it is not manifested by works of mercy ; and another that the love of God cannot dwell in him whose bowels

[1] Num., viii. 10.

of compassion are shut up against his suffering brother.[1] I was a hungered and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink, I was a stranger and ye took me in, naked and ye clothed me, I was sick and ye visited me, I was in prison and ye came unto me: these are the actions proclaimed by the Son of man from the throne of his glory, performed by those to whom he will say, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. And then, identifying himself in glory with those who loved him in suffering, his words are still more wonderful, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me.[2] Why then should there be any marvel, that such a Saviour as this should make it a most important part of his religion, that his followers should assuage the miseries which he regards with divine compassion; that they should alleviate the sorrows which enter into his own heart; that they should share with him the felicity of making others happy; the blessedness of making sacrifices that they may be blessed who have none to help them? Why should not such a King so organize his Kingdom, that the temporal results of the sin which has defiled his universe, should be bounded and limited by the very action and progress of his Kingdom, in its everlasting conflict with sin itself? He has done all this. How affecting is the reproach to his Church, that she so obscurely perceives it all!

3. The angels of God are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.[3] Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; and again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him.[4] So close is the connection between Christ, his angels, and his redeemed. The Greek word which is nearly transferred into English, means first a messenger, and then the spiritual being who is the messenger of God. The Gospel, the Evangel, the joyful Message, is of the same coinage in Greek. And Evangelist* is another word of the same family: the minister of Christ of a peculiar order, whose work it was to bear his joyful message continually, and everywhere.

[1] James, ii. 1–13; 1 John, iii. 17.
[2] Matt., xxv. 31–40.
[3] Heb., i. 14; Psalm civ. 4.
[4] Heb., i. 6, 8.

* Αγγελος—Ευαγγελιον—Ευαγγυλιστης—Ευαγγελιζω.

This office bearer is expressly mentioned as one amongst the ascension gifts of Christ :[1] being named between the obviously ordinary and extraordinary officers of the Church. Philip, the same who was one of the original seven Deacons as is expressly said to distinguish him from the Apostle of the same name, is called, about twenty-seven years afterwards, the Evangelist ; at which time he resided at Cæsarea, having four daughters who were virgins which did prophesy. It was at his house, and on this occasion, that Agabus, a prophet, showed to Paul who with his company was there, that the Jews at Jerusalem whither he was going, would deliver him bound into the hands of the Gentiles.[2] Some years after this, Paul writing to Timothy at Corinth probably, and just before his own offering up, thus addressed him : Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an Evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. What the venerable Apostle understood by this, he had partly explained before, with the most solemn earnestness ; Preach the word, be instant in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.[3] These are the most unquestionable mention I have found of this office : though the places are very numerous which may imply it, more or less clearly ; and this order of office bearers seems to have been numerous, at first. A careful consideration of the labours and acts of these two great Evangelists, as they appear in various scattered notices ; will show that they were neither of the order of Apostles, nor that of Prophets, on the one side ; nor that of ordinary Presbyters on the other, whether of the class of Ministers, or the class of Ruling Elders. But they were Extraordinary Officers, in so far as they did not appertain, in an ordinary way to the regular administration of the settled Church. On the other hand, they are officers permanent in the Church, whenever the occasion demands their employment. They constitute the link, so to speak, between those officers, like Apostles, who have plenary power and are inspired, and those like Elders, who are both ordinary and permanent : an officer excluded from interior work in a completely settled state of the Church, but indispensable in the exterior efforts of the Church to extend itself, and important in various ways on occasions of great internal languishment or destitution. The total disuse of this office is, therefore, without divine war-

[1] Eph., iv. 11. [2] Acts, xxi. 8–15. [3] 2 Tim., iv. 1–5.

rant ; while its internal ordinary use, is contrary to the ordinance of God, and subversive in various ways of the divine polity of the Church.

IV.—1. According to the doctrine I have taught, which I think is plainly the doctrine of the Scriptures, civil society is an ordinance of God ; and its actual formation produces inevitably certain aggregate necessities and results, which with reference to government in itself considered, are perfectly distinct, and capable of an exhaustive scientific statement. It is in society itself that all power is naturally vested by God ; and it is by the naked fact of the existence of society, that these powers manifest themselves in an aggregate manner, as soon as society assumes a condition above that of its ancient tribal form. And these powers thus aggregately manifested, and the functions of society produced thereby, are not casual, in any sense whatever ; but besides being by divine ordination they are of that ordination in such a manner, as to be responsive to the nature of man as a being having Reason, Conscience, and Will ; and also responsive to the nature of God, as the Lawgiver, the Judge, and the Ruler of the Universe. What God leaves to the natural freedom of man, is the shaping of the government of every particular society, according to its own choice, and the creation of such particular institutions under such government thus formed, as that society shall choose ; respect being had, on one hand, to all truth and morality, and on the other to the individual and social progress of the race. The visible Church is an organized society of human beings ; and supposing it could exist independently of divine revelation, everything would be true of it, that is true concerning society absolutely considered ; and supposing it to have a divine revelation, everything in which this society differs fundamentally from all society absolutely considered, is the product of that revelation. The nature and the extent of the resemblance and the difference between the visible Church and all other societies, and the actual nature of the visible Church and its government, and its institutions, as by divine revelation ; I have endeavoured to explain and to demonstrate. As the result of all, I suppose this divine government of this peculiar society, is capable of being clearly exhibited in a few consecutive statements. Thus :

(*a*) The first principle of this government, considered as actually exercised, is that the whole power of it is in the hands of

office bearers, whose office is ordained, defined, and limited by God himself, and every one of whom must have a personal vocation of God to his office, attested by the election of some particular congregation, and by ordination by a Church court. It is a government in the hands of Presbyters—Elders.

(*b*) The second principle is, that this power and government are in their hands, not severally and man by man, but jointly and when they are met as a tribunal, and constituted as such, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Head and Lawgiver of the Church; all authority being in and from Christ, and all efficacy in and by the Holy Ghost. As having such a government, the Church is a commonwealth, and its government is by tribunals composed of a plurality of Presbyters, Elders.

(*c*) The third principle is, that these Presbyters, Elders, are all of one order, all equal in dignity, rank, and authority as Rulers; but that order is divided into two classes, of which one labour in word and doctrine and are stewards of the mysteries of God, in which additional functions all of this class are also of equal rank, authority, and dignity one with another, the class to which each particular Presbyter belongs being determined by vocation and ordination; and every tribunal of the Church is constituted out of some of each class of Presbyters, Elders. The tribunals of the Church are neither clerical nor laic: they are all Presbyterial.

(*d*) The fourth principle is, that the whole visible Church of Christ, is one Church, and might all be embraced under one administration. Its division into national and denominational Churches, is a necessity arising under the actual course of Providence, and is neither avoidable, nor of itself hurtful, under the Gospel dispensation. The division of a particular denominational or national Church into smaller parts, such as congregations, Presbyteries, and Synods, is by the ordination of God, and so far from breaking its unity or efficiency, consolidates both. The congregations with their tribunals are the elemental particulars of the government; and each one possesses a part of all possessed by the whole Church. Their union constitutes the Presbytery with its tribunal over those composing it; the union of Presbyteries constitutes the Synod with its tribunal over those composing it: the union of all constituting the universal council, the General Assembly of the whole Church with jurisdiction over all.

The principle of representation begins with the vocation of the office bearer by the congregation, and vitally pervades the whole system. The government of the Christian Church is a strictly limited Representative Government, in the bosom of a free, spiritual commonwealth.

2. The erection of such a government as this at the very dawn of ancient society, and in the midst of Asiatic despotism ; the perfect development of it in the heart of the Roman Empire, by a portion of one of its conquered provinces ; the wide dissemination of it through the earth, in utter disregard of every form of human tyranny ; its perfect preservation throughout centuries of gross darkness and universal oppression ; its reappearance wherever it had been apparently extinguished ; and the august spectacle it now presents throughout the earth : all combined exhibits one of the most striking phenomena in the career of the human race. It has withstood everything, through all ages, from within and from without, before which everything else has perished. It cannot perish as long as it is true to Christ, the Son of the living God, who made it and pronounced it invulnerable even to the gates of hell, so long as it is built upon him. All that it has yet accomplished, and all it may hereafter do, for the temporal amelioration and the spiritual regeneration of mankind, is due only to him who is over all, God blessed forevermore. Of itself, and considered merely as the form through which the Church acts, it appears to be capable of producing, in the highest degree, those two opposite results which are the perfection of all government ; namely, the highest individual development, and the highest united efficiency. But what gives it its great glory and power, is that God has made it the instrument of diffusing through the Church, and of bestowing on men through her, the benefits of those inestimable Gifts, to the explanation of which this Fifth Book is devoted ; amongst which Gifts, Office Bearers and the Government in their hands, must be ranked as not the least.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD,

SUBJECTIVELY CONSIDERED.

ARGUMENT OF THE GENERAL CONCLUSION.

The general demonstration, according to the conception I have of the Knowledge of God subjectively considered, and according to the method I adopt in the statement of that Knowledge, seems to me to be concluded at the end of the preceding Book. The following chapter, therefore, has two objects, and is divided into two parts. The first object, to which the first large division of the chapter is devoted, is to point out the fundamental nature of religion and of salvation: to disclose the absolute and universal identity of Immanuel, with true religion and with salvation: to explain the nature of the covenant of Grace, and its relation to the nature of God, and to the possibility of true religion in man: to disclose the manifestation of that eternal covenant, in the creation and progress of the Kingdom of God in this world, from the first proclamation of the covenant to the present time: and to exhibit the actual point reached in the manifestation of the covenant, and in the progress of the Kindom of God under it. The second object, to which the second large division of the chapter is devoted, is to disclose—in brief—the further manifestation, and the consummation of the covenant of Grace, and the further progress, final triumph, and eternal state of the Kingdom of God: which is attempted, not at all in the way of prophetical interpretation, but wholly as matter of Christian doctrine. In doing this, a general and condensed survey is attempted, of the chief of those infinite future realities, which the Scriptures connect with the person, and work, and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ; and their relation to the Godhead—their effects upon the created universe, especially upon this earth—their relation to the Church in its Gospel, its Millennial, and its Eternal state—their influence upon the mortal and the immortal existence of the human race, considered as a whole and as individuals, considered as united to Christ and as without Christ—and finally their relation to the second coming and Millennial Reign of the glorified Redeemer—are all sought to be disclosed in so far, as in the present state of Knowledge, light can be thereby thrown upon

the future manifestation, and the consummation of God's eternal covenant. The chapter closes with a short statement concerning the Son of God, and saving Knowledge of him. Two ideas pervade the whole. The infinite Grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord:—the end thereof, infinite Glory to God, and eternal Blessedness to his restored universe and his redeemed creatures.

CHAPTER XXXII.

GENERAL CONCLUSION: PROGRESS AND CONSUMMATION OF GOD'S ETERNAL COVENANT.

I. 1. The Objective Knowledge of God—and its Statement: Relation thereof to religion.—2. The Subjective Knowledge of God: the Means and Effects thereof.—3. The middle term between God and sinless man subverted by the Fall: Restored by the Mediator between God and sinful men: Relation of Salvation by Grace to the Nature of God.—4. Relation of the manner of Salvation to the mode of the Divine Existence: the Eternal Covenant of Redemption: special Relation of the Son of God thereto.—5. First Proclamation of this Eternal Covenant, and the effects thereof: the Kingdom created by and under it: Messiah the Prince: Progress of the Kingdom to the present time.—6. The actual Posture of the Kingdom, in the form of the Gospel Church: the Demonstration which has been attempted of the Subjective Knowledge of God unto Salvation.—II. 1. Consummation of God's Eternal Covenant, with Relation to Him and to all his Works.—2. Future Progress of the Gospel Church: Millennial state: Eternal state.—3. Every Effect of Sin upon the Universe retrieved: the consummation of the Covenant of Grace, with Reference to this Earth.—4. Effect of that consummation upon the Human Race, individually considered: Eternal Death of the Wicked: Eternal Life of the Righteous.—5. The Sum and Result of all, with Relation to God, and with Relation to the Created Universe, especially the human Race.—6. The second Coming of the Son of Man—and his Millennial Glory.—7. Jesus, and the Knowledge of him, and the Life through him.

I.—1. The objective treatment of divine truth depends for its success upon our knowledge of God, who is both the author and substance of it all. Even our knowledge of ourselves, of the created universe, of the course and event of providence—indeed of all things—depends, when objectively considered, upon this knowledge of God, the author and substance of all truth. In total ignorance of God, there can be no possibility of any treatment *à priori* of his nature, his Attributes, his works—or the relation of any truth to him: that is there can be no objective treatment of divine truth, in our total ignorance of it. When our *à priori* knowledge of God, therefore, is ridiculed by infidel philosophers, and the ridicule is extended to all attempts to treat divine truth objectively; it is their own method, not ours, which

is justly amenable to their contempt. For if there is any such thing as Religion, its true nature is to be sought in the relation of an infinite personal Spirit, to a finite personal spirit—that is the relation of God to man: and the knowledge by man of this relation, and the knowledge by him both of God and of himself thus related, is the exact measure not only of the reality, but of the possibility of religion. And if this knowledge could be imagined to be perfect, religion would necessarily be perfect; provided we could conceive of the finite spirit arriving at such a perfect intuition of the infinite Spirit, without involving a contradiction in terms, making the finite infinite, and abolishing the relation on which the existence of Religion depends. But this mortal intuition of God, is strictly speaking, the only conceivable form of strictly mortal knowledge, *à priori*, of God; and it is this, in so many empty and pretentious forms, which derides all true religion; this, which so far from asserting, I have proved, in another place, to be absolutely impossible. God must manifest himself to man, in order that man may know him; and I have demonstrated, in the former Treatise, in an exhaustive manner, the fact of this manifestation, all the ways in which it is accomplished, and all the methods under each way. The knowledge of God thus obtained by man, is capable of distinct treatment as a body of truth; one, and the highest of whose aspects is religious. God manifests himself to man in the works of Creation and Providence; in the whole work of God manifest in the flesh, and that of God the Holy Ghost; in the Inspired Word, and in the self-conscious existence of the human soul, created, and renewed in his own image. It is not of God simply considered, therefore, that we treat *à priori*, upon the vain pretext that we have of ourselves, an intuition of the infinite; but it is through Religion, the relation between God and man, revealed to us on the side of God in his manifestations of himself to us, that the sum of our knowledge of God at every stage of its progress, is capable of an exact objective statement. In proportion as our Religion is true, and our Knowledge of its elemental truths is exact; that is, in proportion as we understand the relation between God and man; must be the certainty and the completeness of our statement of the Knowledge of God objectively considered.

2. In the same manner, the subjective treatment of divine

truth involves *à priori* knowledge of ourselves, as really as it does *à posteriori* knowledge of God and of Religion. It is not to influence God—but it is to influence man, that Religion exists. God is from eternity, and is the source of all things: man is of yesterday, the creature of God, the source of nothing that rises higher than a second cause. How vain is it to speak of his having, of himself, such an intuition of God, as to guide him steadily along the line of the infinite relation which God bears to him; when he has no such intuition of himself as to enable him to take a single step along that immeasurable line, except by the light which shines from the divine source of light. Even this *à priori* knowledge of himself, which he must possess before it is possible for him to know what is, what ought to be, or what can be wrought in him by God's truth and God's Spirit; is not only unreal, but is impossible to any created being, much less to a fallen sinner, independently of his *à posteriori* knowledge of God, and from God. We cannot know ourselves as creatures, except as we know God the Creator; we cannot know ourselves as sinners, except as we know God as our Lawgiver; we cannot know salvation, except as we know the Saviour. It is God making himself known to us by means of those manifestations of which I have already spoken, who at the same time, and by the same means,—and perhaps I should add, to the same degree, makes us known to ourselves. It is in him that we live and move and have our being: and the very conviction of his existence which leaves all men without excuse, and by means of which his eternal power and Godhead are clearly seen and understood through the works of his hands, is a manifestation of God in them made by himself, and a revelation of his wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Step by step the knowledge of God unto salvation is a revelation to us, and a revelation in us. We are the subjects of a sublime subjective work of God's word and Spirit in us; and at the same time, both God and our own souls, and the relation between the two, are objects of a sublime objective knowledge. Created at first in the image of God—but fallible; after our fall, restored indeed to the lost image of God, but so restored that the Godhead has taken our human nature into eternal union with itself, and has in addition made human beings partakers of the divine nature by a divine regeneration—thus securing them from all lapse forever. The

object of the knowledge is infinite—even God himself: the means of it, his manifestations of himself; the result of it knowledge of ourselves. The subject of the work, is lost sinners,—who being restored to the image and united to the Son of God, are made partakers of the divine nature, and eternally exalted in glory and blessedness beyond all conception of the heart of man.

3. In a certain sense, the middle term between God and man, the relation between them, namely, out of which Religion springs, assumes a most wonderful aspect as soon as sin enters, and grace and salvation are proclaimed. That middle term as between God and polluted rebels, lost all its original significance by the Fall of man: and what takes its place is the mediator between God and sinful men—the Godman—the Saviour of the world. Under the Covenant of Grace the formula is, God—Godman—man. Of man the statement is brief and simple. First, life; then, immortality. Of life two possibilities; first, pollution attended by misery; secondly, purity attended by blessedness. Of immortality, two possibilities: first, shame and everlasting contempt, as the conclusion of the pollution and misery; secondly, infinite glory and felicity, as the conclusion of the purity and blessedness which grace produced. Of God, in whose light every particular concerning man is seen, the statement notwithstanding all his manifestations of himself, can never appear to the thoughtful mind, wholly divested of the difficulty which attends its overpowering nature. God, the infinite, the eternal, the unchangeable, in his being and in his perfections: perfections, infinite in number, and each one infinite in itself—of which we know imperfectly a very few in comparison of all, and even of these so little that even a classification of them above cavil, has never been suggested. This living and true God, our Creator, our Preserver, our Lawgiver, our Ruler, our Father, our Saviour, our Judge and Redeemer; so exists that in his infinite Spiritual Essence, there is absolute unity, and but one God; and yet the mode of that existence is such that of that Essence there are three divine *persons*, as we express it in English, the same in substance, equal in power and glory: namely the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. In the matter of our salvation—it is the Father, to whose Goodness, Love, Holiness, Justice, Truth, Wisdom, Power, Will, the Scriptures constantly direct our thoughts.

It is to the Holy Ghost, as the Spirit that giveth life, as the Spirit of all truth, and as the Spirit of all Holiness, that they constantly direct us; the Spirit of the Father and of the Son —the true author of all truth unto salvation, whether revealed or only inspired—the true renewer and sanctifier of the human soul—the true comforter of God's children and Reprover of the world. Between these two, is the Son; as between God and men, he is the Mediator. That he may be Mediator, he is God and man—Godman. As Mediator, he is Prophet, Priest, and King: as all he executes the offices of all, in Humiliation and in Exaltation. And that Word of Life, of which I have said the Holy Spirit was the true Inspirer and Revealer, is the only infallible rule to guide us in all knowledge of God unto salvation, objectively considered; as it is the only direct instrument used by the Spirit in all his subjective work in us, unto salvation. From the moment that we find the Godman placed between God and men, as the sum of every relation involved in the word Religion, and the complete expression of everything that points towards salvation for lost sinners; two ideas—with their opposites —reign throughout all the word of God, and throughout all the dealings of God with men. In this life, it is to penitent and believing sinners Grace abounding—Grace triumphant: and in the life to come, it is Grace swallowed up in glory. On the other hand, it is in this life, to God's obdurate enemies, warnings, rebukes, and threatenings, mingled with exhortations and entreaties to be reconciled to him: and in the life to come, the worm that shall never die, and the fire that shall never be quenched.

4. The fact that there is any salvation for sinners does not depend more absolutely upon the nature of God, than the manner of salvation does upon the mode of his existence. I have proved in a great variety of forms, that supposing the doctrine of the Trinity, as it is commonly called, to be plainly revealed in the Scriptures, it is not conceivable that a way of salvation at all different from that disclosed in them, could accord with that mode of the divine existence; and on the other hand, that if nothing had been directly taught concerning the mode of the divine existence, the way of salvation disclosed in the Scriptures would be incomprehensible, upon any supposition of the mode of the divine existence, except that mode revealed therein. I will add, that seeing we know nothing concerning the peculiar mode of God's

existence developed in the revealed manner of saving sinners, except in connection with that special revelation ; we have a vast illustration of what I have just said in the fact, that every false religion that has existed, has violated in some way the fundamental convictions of human nature, in the manner in which they have proposed to deliver men from the wrath of God ; and I have proved that this result was absolutely unavoidable, because upon the fundamental convictions of human nature a way of deliverance for sinners, much more true salvation, was inscrutable upon any knowledge of God attainable without the revelation contained in the Scriptures. With that revelation, we are carried back into eternity ; and the foundations of the revealed way of life, which is so closely connected with the mode of God's being, are laid bare in that very mode of being. The Scriptures speak continually of the Counsel of God, of the Purpose of God, of the Will of God, of the Decree of God. This created universe in preference to all others—this plan of salvation to the exclusion of all others—this scheme of providence in the place of all others : all are of God—all have as their chief end the illustration of his own Glory, and the blessedness of the universe itself in the highest degree consistent with that chief end. The Scriptures plainly reveal to us—nor is it conceivable that it could be otherwise—that it is Jehovah, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, of whose counsel, purpose, will, pleasure, decree, they continually speak ; and while all these acts and exercises of the Godhead are always characterized by the same unity which distinguishes the divine Essence, the manner of working is equally characterized by the distinctness which belongs to the personal mode of the divine existence. In a most particular manner is this true of the Plan of Salvation, and of the Eternal Covenant according to which that plan proceeds. Under it the office work, as it is commonly expressed, of each Person of the Godhead, is perfectly distinct from that of each of the other Persons ; and that of each varies perceptibly within certain limits, under successive dispensations of it thus far disclosed, and will incur further variations according to the revelations not yet accomplished, nor perhaps fully understood. Both according to the counsel, purpose, decree, and will of God, considered in his infinite unity ; and also according to the Eternal Covenant of Grace and Redemption between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, wherein that

counsel, purpose, decree, and will of God are expressed according to that manner which discriminates the peculiar mode of the divine existence ; God considered absolutely, and again considered with relation to his threefold personality, is revealed to us concerning the whole matter of our salvation, and concerning his own infinite glory therein. Each Person of the Godhead, according to his special office work in our salvation under this Eternal Covenant, is a party to it not only with reference to the glory of God thereby, and with reference to every result of it upon the whole universe, but also, and very particularly, with reference to the salvation of God's Elect, and the manner thereof. It is very obvious, therefore, that the elect of God are from eternity parties in interest to this Covenant ; and are so by and through every Person of the Godhead, every one of whom in his participation in the covenant had special relation to the salvation of the Elect, according to the special office work of each Person under the covenant. But the whole office work of the Second Person of the Godhead under this covenant, is of such a nature, and identifies him so completely with those whom he redeems and saves ; that it is to him the Scriptures pre-eminently direct our attention as representing the Elect of God in the covenant ; and it is absolutely by means of our union with him through a divine regeneration, and as our crucified and risen Saviour, that we ever become parties in fact to the covenant in his blood. Moreover, there is a special reference to him in the office work of both the other Persons of the Godhead : for the gift of him to be our Saviour is the crowning proof of the love of the Father, and it is for his sake that we are both justified and adopted by him ; while the entire work of the Spirit is with perpetual reference to him. Our salvation, therefore, is absolutely through grace, absolutely by covenant, absolutely responsive to the nature of God, absolutely decisive concerning the mode of his being.

5. The existence of this Eternal Covenant is first manifested in the proclamation of the Saviour by God, as a part of his sentence upon Satan after the Fall of Man. That proclamation changed the destiny of the universe, as completely as the Fall of Man had before changed it. Instead of executing at once the penalty annexed to the Covenant of Works, God pronounced upon Satan, upon the man and the woman, and upon the earth, what I have called an interlocutory sentence—opening up the

whole career of the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, and adjourning the cause, so to speak, till the earthly career of that Kingdom should be accomplished, and the time come to pronounce final sentence. The judge of quick and dead who will pronounce that sentence in the great day, is he who was proclaimed at first as the Seed of the woman : afterward as the Seed of Abraham in whom God promised that all the nations of the earth should be blessed. For the Kingdom itself is made up wholly of his brethren whom he has redeemed with his own blood, whom his own Spirit regenerates, whom his own Father gave to him in the Eternal Covenant, for whose sake he took flesh, and of whom he is the Prophet, the Priest, and the King. The Word of God contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, sustains toward this heavenly Kingdom, of which Messiah—Christ—is the only Head and Lord, relations unspeakably glorious—as I have attempted in various places to disclose. The Kingdom itself under many aspects, and through successive Dispensations, has survived through all time ; and the Eternal Covenant of which it is the great outbirth, has received to the present moment an accomplishment so exact and so universal, that every human being who has existed, and every incident that has influenced the career of the human race, has been a separate proof alike of its divine reality and of its unalterable steadfastness. From the Fall of Man through all time, what this world has exhibited and what all generations have seen, is the development of that condition of all things produced by the proclamation of the Covenant of Grace by God, in pronouncing the interlocutory sentence after that Fall. From the uttering of that sentence till the Flood, everything remained in such a position, that the Kingdom of Messiah would have been the only, and of necessity a universal Kingdom, if the world had received him : instead of which eight souls only of all living flesh escaped the Flood. From the call of Abraham, the establishment of the visible Church, the erection of human Kingdoms and thereby the visible and final change of the relation of the world to the organized Kingdom of Messiah ; all things were shaped with a more direct reference to his advent, and to the posture of his Kingdom when he should come. He came : and once more the world, which under the ancient form of society had so steadfastly rejected him from Adam to Abraham ; received under the new form of society created

under God's covenant with Noah, a distinct offer by Messiah himself to save it under this new form. The last and greatest of the universal world-powers, for answer, crucified the Lord of life ; instigated thereto by the very race—the very Church—the very commonwealth which, of all on earth, were most peculiarly his own. Can it be possible, after this, for any world-power, any commonwealth, any organized Church, any race as such, to inherit the Millennial Glory ? The chosen kingdom, chosen commonwealth, chosen people, chosen Church—all are guilty of the blood of the Son of God ! Where are they now ? How will they—and those of whom they were divinely-appointed types—appear at the second coming of the Son of Man ? And now, last of all, more than eighteen centuries of the Gospel Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace have passed over the world ; and the living generation stands, for a little while, in its lot, to accomplish its own probation, to behold the progress of the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain together under the curse of sin, but with God's promise of deliverance, and then to give place to another generation. And what is the result of these sixty centuries of probation for man, and progress for the Kingdom of Messiah ? What is the result of these eighteen centuries of Gospel Grace during which the glorified Godman has been exalted to the throne of the universe—and has sent the Spirit of God to abide with his people as their Comforter—with the world as its Reprover ?

6. We shall have no more sacrifice for sin, no more revelation of the saving grace of God, no more incarnation of the Son of God. When the glorified Redeemer sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, the heavens received him until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. Until Jehovah makes his foes his footstool, his place is at his right hand. And being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, and having shed it forth on Pentecost ; those last days predicted so long before by Joel, and now explained by Peter, are fully come, and God pours out his Spirit upon all flesh. And while they last, and until that great and notable day of the Lord which closes them shall come ; it is the constant and unalterable doctrine of all Scripture that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be

saved. And for the very reason that God's Spirit is poured out, and that these last days are not ended, and that they who call on the name of the Lord shall be saved ; the Gospel Church is transcendently bound to preach to every creature that Lord who is able to save to the uttermost, that lost sinners may believe in his name, and may call upon him, and may be saved. Now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour. Just so the great Apostle of the Gentiles described the posture of the Kingdom, when these last days had but recently commenced ; just in his own words, which David had uttered in prophecy so many centuries before, we may describe the posture of the Kingdom still. What I have attempted is to demonstrate upon the word of God, the Kingdom of Messiah, exactly as it has stood since these last days began, as it stands now, and as it will stand while they continue. What I have sought is, to disclose the blessings and benefits of the Covenant of Redemption as a present possession, now and here, of inestimable grace ; and as a future and unfading inheritance of eternal glory. In this endeavour the whole Knowledge of God unto salvation subjectively considered, must of necessity pass under consideration, be classified, be explicated. But the very nature of the attempt demanded above all, two things ; first, the just statement of everything according to the divine proportion of faith : and secondly, the total omission, as far as possible, of everything uncertain, and if, in the present state of Knowledge, this should prove in any case to be impossible, then the distinct statement of the nature of the uncertainty. For my fundamental conception is, that the knowledge of God unto salvation is a science of positive truth, both inductive and deductive. And according to the method by which I attempt to develop that conception, the demonstration of the subjective aspect of the knowledge of God, to which this Treatise is devoted, was exhausted at the conclusion of the Fifth Book. All that commonly passes under the term Eschatology, or last Things, which it has been usual to discuss separately, and at the end of works on Theology ; I have considered it more proper to discuss in immediate connection with those topics in the body of the work, from which they cannot be separated without a certain violence. And in proceeding now to make some general statements with

regard to them, my object is not to repeat any discussion of them ; but to indicate generally the consummation of the Covenant of Grace, for all the future beyond the point now actually reached ; in a manner somewhat analogous to that in which I have just been exhibiting its progress through all the past, up to the consummation it has now reached.

II.—1. It is not possible to doubt that God has objects worthy of himself, in all his works of creation, of providence, and of grace ; or to doubt that those objects will be perfectly accomplished. What those objects are, he has informed us in his blessed word, to a certain extent ; and what he has there said, accords with all we are able to gather from every other manifestation of himself to us. He purposes, by all his works, to make known his own being and perfections to all his intelligent universe, for the glory of his own great name ; and in doing this, to bestow the highest blessedness on his creatures which can consist with that chief object. In the Plan of Salvation these two objects are identified in the highest degree, which the infinite wisdom of God could suggest, and his infinite power execute. Concerning it, therefore, he has revealed to man the knowledge of his counsel, purpose, will and decree, and also the knowledge of his Eternal Covenant relating thereto : with a distinctness and fulness, out of all comparison with the knowledge of him attainable by man, concerning anything else. So that the perfect consummation of that Covenant of God, and the complete accomplishment of everything embraced in it, are invested with the highest conceivable certainty.

2. The existence of the Kingdom of God is the immediate result of the proclamation by him of his Eternal Covenant. The perpetuity of that Kingdom, is as certain as the perpetuity of the Covenant ; as certain as the perpetuity of the existence of God. The accomplishment of the mission of the Church of the living God is as certain, as that the will of God cannot be resisted ; as certain as that each person of the Godhead will continue to perform, as each has performed since the foundation of the world, the mutual stipulations between them all for their own eternal glory. And the eternal triumph, glory, and blessedness of the Church cannot be called in question, without impeaching the immaculate truth of God, which has a thousand times declared it all ; without impeaching the infinite power of God, who

has pledged his very life for it all; without impeaching the infinite fidelity of God to his own glory, to which that Church is the eternal witness, and his infinite faithfulness to the Church herself, whose endless renown and felicity depend on her endless service and enjoyment of him. In the accomplishment of her mission of gathering and perfecting the saints to the end of the world, the vicissitudes she may incur, the persecutions she may endure, the perils she may encounter, the struggles she must make, before she can enter upon her Millennial glory; may far transcend her own habitual expectations, and would probably appal her if she saw them clearly. But all these things, like all things besides, will work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. What is certain is, that her mission of Evangelization must be accomplished in her present Gospel form. It is this Gospel Church, founded upon the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, once crucified, now made of God both Lord and Christ; which constitutes the visible Kingdom of God from the day of Pentecost to the second coming of the Son of Man. How much this Church accomplished during the first age of its existence—we know, to a certain extent, from the statements and intimations of the New Testament Scriptures. What it has accomplished since—what it is capable of accomplishing in its present condition—what it has endured without being extinguished—what is required for its complete deliverance from the polluting contact of the world, and its thorough extrication from the horrible incumbent mass of merely nominal Christianity; all these are topics which, alas! it is easy to overlook, but which lie very near to the heart of every one that sighs and that cries for all the abominations that be done in the midst of Jerusalem—every one that takes pleasure even in the stones of Zion and favours the very dust thereof. Concerning the coming glory of the Church, and the consummation of the Covenant of Grace with respect to her; the Scriptures appear to me to reveal, as yet future, two states very distinct from each other: namely, her Millennial state and her Eternal state. The former I judge to be upon, and connected with this earth delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God;—as the Apostle Paul expresses it, explaining at the the same time that we ought to hope with confidence, and wait

with patience, for that glorious manifestation of the sons of God. That Millennial glory seems to me to be a dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, as distinct and as real as any preceding dispensation under that Covenant; and that it can no more be considered merely the perfection of the Gospel Church, than that Church can be considered merely the perfection of the Jewish Dispensation. The whole analogy of the past dealings of God with his Kingdom, the whole economy of the Covenant of Redemption, and the explicit revelation of God concerning the Millennial state of the Church; appear to set that glorious state distinctly forth, as a separate dispensation of the Kingdom of Messiah. Besides this, there are two considerations, one of which enters vitally into the nature of the present, and the other into that of the coming state, both of which seem to be decisive. Concerning the coming state, there does not appear to be the least reason to believe, that any part of its object is to offer grace and salvation to impenitent men; while to offer grace and salvation to every creature is the pre-eminent characteristic of the present dispensation. On the other hand the condition of glory and blessedness, of perfection and felicity, which is absolutely characteristic of the Millennial state; is one historically, practically, dogmatically and ethically superior to the condition which is attainable either by the Church, or by individual Christians in this life, under the present Dispensation. I do not, however, understand that the Millennial state is the final state of the Kingdom of God; nor that this earth is the final theatre of its glory; nor that its organization and its ordinances, will adhere to it forever. Its Eternal state is still higher, still more glorious; and its entrance upon it will be prepared by the Millennial state, according to its manner, in a way analogous to the preparation by its Gospel state for its Millennial state. It is the second coming of the Son of Man, which initiates the Millennial glory of his kingdom. It is at the delivery up of the Kingdom by the Son to the Father, upon the Lamb's Book of Life, after he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power—all his enemies under his feet, and death the last of them destroyed; that the Eternal Glory of the Church begins—all things subdued unto the Son—the Son himself subject unto him that put all things under him—God all in all. Concerning the Millennial Glory, one apostle has said, Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet

appear what we shall be ; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is. And another has said, When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. And concerning all the blessedness that awaits the redeemed forevermore, Isaiah has said and Paul repeated, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. Blessed is the man who can add, with the Apostle, But God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit ! —I speak with great hesitation upon topics so sublime, so remote from human thinking, and upon which the mind of this generation of God's true children seems to be at once so anxious and so unsettled. What I insist on is, the consummation of the Covenant of Grace with reference to the Kingdom of God, first in the Millennial Glory, and then in the Eternal state of immediate fruition of God ; both of which await the Church of Christ.

3. It is impossible to follow the chains of thought perpetually suggested in the Scriptures concerning the origin, career, and consummation of the Kingdom of God under the Covenant of Grace ; without perceiving that at one point or another, and in one way or another, everything in the universe is implicated in the result. God's work of creation is the basis of all his other works ; and the extent to which the entrance of sin, first amongst the angels in heaven, and then into our world through the seduction of Eve by a fallen angel, deranged the created universe ; and the manner of retrieving, restoring, and avenging that fearful derangement, by means of this Eternal Covenant ; draws within the pale of Christian doctrine, or at the least of Christian speculation, the whole creative work of God. In like manner the Covenant of Works which God in boundless mercy entered into with Adam after his creation, has failed in nothing except that its breach rendered man incapable of life by it ; and every created thing, and every living soul, can find refuge from its just and fearful penalty, only by means of the Covenant of Grace. So also God's work of Providence, wrought out under those complications which seem to us so stupendous, of the Law of Nature indelibly fixed by creation itself, the Law of covenanted perfection whose penalty is incurred every instant of our mortal existence, and the Law of infinite Grace through the blood of Christ ; must shape itself with a boundless wisdom, power, justice, good-

ness, and truth, so that the nations which forget God shall be turned into hell, and the people whose God is the Lord shall be blessed forevermore, and death and hell shall be cast into the lake of torment, and Messiah the Son of God, and the Saviour of the World shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied. It is to our faith that everything is revealed—to our curiosity nothing: and all is so revealed that our faith must stand in the power of God, and not in the wisdom of men. Simple, brief, and direct, are all the words of God; topics the most overwhelming to us, treated in the same manner as topics which we esteem the most humble; the smallest thing that immediately concerns our salvation carefully explained, and things the most august which do not immediately concern it, passed over with a notice as incidental as their relation to our destiny. And that is the measure of our knowledge, concerning the manner in which the consummation of the Covenant of Grace, will affect the universe and every particular existence in it. Of the whole effect of the sin that entered heaven, upon the universe of God, we only know so much as concerns the angels that fell, and so much as involves our ruin through theirs; but we know that the retribution of their sin—is the vengeance of eternal fire. Of the effect of the Fall of Man upon the created universe, beyond the range of our own planet, many very remarkable statements of the Scriptures exist,—which it would be unprofitable to discuss in a cursory manner, here: but we know that whatever they were, they will all be retrieved. The earth we inhabit was cursed for our sake, and the whole creation thereof groaneth and travaileth in pain together under that curse. And we know that the whole will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God; that there shall be new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness shall dwell; and last of all, that the earth, and all the works that are therein shall be burned up, and the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. And my understanding is, that this period of the New Heavens and the New Earth, so distinctly stated by Isaiah and Peter, and described with so much detail by John, is the period of the Millennial Glory of the Church; and the commencement of her state of Eternal Glory, is the Day of God, synonymous with that dissolution and passing away of the heavens and the earth, so dis-

tinctly stated by the blessed Saviour, and so often mentioned throughout the Scriptures.

4. But it is our individual relation to these vast subjects, their relation to our personal destiny, which so deeply concerns us ; and it is in this aspect of them that God has taken so much pains to inform us, and to excite our interest in them. It is not easy,—perhaps not possible—to conceive what more God could have done, that he has not done, to accomplish in us both of those merciful designs : to explain which, would only be to recapitulate, in brief, the chief contents both of the present Treatise and of the one that preceded it. In one aspect of the case of each human being, it is precisely like that of every other human being : for all are born in sin, all put off their mortal existence, all incur in another state of being a resurrection, an eternal judgment, and a just recompense of reward. But in another aspect, the case of each human being is deeply affected by the condition of all things, and especially of all divine things, in the midst of which his own mortal probation is cast by the sovereign disposal of God. Whether we would exist at all, and under what circumstances, are matters which could never be submitted to our consideration. And as they are matters which put our destiny, both for time and for eternity, absolutely in the hands of God ; one would suppose that the last thing that would occur to us, would be any attempt to evade or to resist his boundless dominion over us ; and that the last thing which would become us, would be voluntary ignorance of him, and deliberate disobedience to him. This sovereign disposal of God concerning the fact and the circumstances of each individual existence, proceeds, so to speak, in a double manner. For a whole generation, or many successive generations, are brought into existence, for example, at a certain stage of the progress of God's Kingdom, under the Gospel Church for instance : and besides this aggregate discrimination, there is a strictly personal discrimination by God, in the exercise of which each individual in every generation, is born to the peculiar lot and makes his mortal probation under the personal circumstances, which distinguish him from every other being. Besides these things, overwhelming as they are, other two must be added, which ought to stop every mouth forever—except to make confession of God unto salvation. The first of these is the constitutional peculiarities, physical, mental, and moral of each particular being, which

affect his destiny ; and the second is the special dealings of God both providential and gracious, with each particular being, after he has been launched, in the sovereign manner I have attempted to portray, upon a mortal existence which can have no issue but in immortality—of glory and blessedness on one side, or of shame and contempt on the other. The generation that now is, finds itself in living contact with the work of God's infinite grace, advanced to a certain point of its sublime œconomy, considered with reference to each individual, to the human race, and to the Eternal Covenant. We ask ourselves, what relation have we as separate existences, and what as composing the present mortal portion of a race so wonderfully and fearfully made, to the awful future, and the infinite consummation of the Eternal Covenant ? As to the whole race of man, nothing seems to me to be more certainly revealed, than that its mortal existence, both individual and aggregate, will be utterly extinguished—and that the personal existence of every individual of it, after his mortality is done, will be immortal. An eternal judgment awaits every human being ; but it awaits us, not in our mortal state, but after death and after the resurrection of the body ; if we except those who may be alive at the second coming of the Lord, among whom the righteous will incur an instantaneous change, and the wicked will be accursed, and go away into everlasting punishment. Whatever may be the Millennial glory of Christ and his Church in other respects, the enemies of God can have no part therein. Whatever may be the nature of the eternal judgment in other respects, it is impossible for sinful men who are without God, without Christ, and without hope, in all things concerning which they will be judged, to be acquitted as sons of God and brethren of Christ. Whatever may be the nature of the heavenly and eternal state of the righteous who have followed Christ in the regeneration, and reigned with him in Millennial glory ; they whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life can form no part of the glorious host, which he delivers to the Father in its perfect state, upon that Book of Life. It is manifest, therefore, how the whole progress of the eternal covenant, and how the complete consummation of it, alike involves the perdition of ungodly men. The endless existence of the wicked, and their utter perdition, are just as certain as the endless existence of the righteous, and their great glory and blessedness. And the certainty on both sides is

such, that to natural reason and conscience it is perfectly unavoidable, according to all the knowledge we have of God and of ourselves. Besides which, all the spiritual insight we obtain of divine things, in the whole progress of God's work of grace within us, settles more and more deeply in every pious soul, that this is the result, on one side and the other, manifested in the entire dealings of God with man; that it is declared times without number in his blessed word; that it is involved in his very nature and ours, as well as in the relation between the two which itself involves the possibility of religion; and that the result flows from the nature of that relation whether it is considered in its original form, or in the form created by the Covenant of Grace. With regard to the hope of eternal life so deeply seated in the human soul, and the assurance of it which is so thoroughly the Essence of the Gospel of God; nothing need be urged here in vindication of the truth that the realization of that hope, and the possession of that blessed immortality, are possible only through the Lord Jesus Christ—possible through him only to such as are made conformable unto him. I have traced as clearly as I could, the common progress of every human being, to the point at which God's distinguishing mercy makes the lost sinner an heir of salvation; and then I have traced with the greatest care the individual career of each child of God in the progress of the work of grace within him, and the manifestation of that work by him in the great offices of Christianity; and then the creation, and gifts, and life, of the Gospel Church composed of these children of God. And now we ask ourselves, what more concerning these heirs of the infinite inheritance, individually considered, will the further progress, and the complete consummation of the Covenant of Grace, bring forth? The most comprehensive answer is, that whatever awaits them will always exalt them—always increase the glory of their Lord and their own conformity unto him. Temporal death will release them forever from mortality and sin, and exalt them to companionship with Jesus in Paradise. The resurrection of the body will exalt them still higher, and bring them to a still closer conformity to the glorified Redeemer. The judgment of the great day will inconceivably magnify the glory of the Lord and of his grace; wherein they will be openly acquitted and acknowledged as reigning together with Christ in infinite blessedness, and the place of each one in the host of the glorified saints

be proclaimed. And then when the whole work of grace is completely accomplished, and the whole work of glory resulting therefrom arrives at the point, where the Kingdom in its absolute completion is handed over to the Father, into its eternal heavenly state ; the final exaltation pointed out by the Scriptures, is reached by every child of God, in that immediate fruition of God, and the glory and blessedness and eternal increase springing therefrom. The eternal covenant of God is consummated as to the elect of God ; and this eternal heavenly state is the result as to them, of grace condescending so low that God became man, rising so high that man partakes of God. Exactly what we shall be—and what it all signifies—the two mortals, who of all that ever lived perhaps could have best answered, have answered. To the first question, John has answered, it doth not yet appear what the sons of God shall be : but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is. To the second question Paul has answered, it means that—God giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ : it means that everything has reached that consummation, that God may be all in all.

5. There can be but one supreme will in the universe : there can be no salvation for sinners, except through grace. The relation of these two propositions to each other, and to the infinite Spirit who is the true and living God, becomes comprehensible to human reason as soon as the mode of God's being is known. The eternal purpose of that supreme will to save sinners, finds expression in a way responsive to the inscrutable nature, and the inscrutable mode thereof: and the consummation of the will, and of the grace, and of the way of manifesting all three, as completely illustrates the infinite God, as mortals are capable of understanding him. The Eternal Covenant of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, expresses with reference to the threefold personality which is the form in which the unity of the divine essence subsists, the same infinite purpose, will, decree, which are expressed by the mere use of such terms with reference to that infinite Spirit, considered in the absolute unity of its essence. And so the consummation of the Eternal Covenant brings us back to that infinite Spirit in its unity. As for the sons of God —what we know is that when the glorified Redeemer appears, they will see him as he is, and be forever like him. But as to God himself, what will occur when his will, and his grace, and

his covenant concerning the salvation of sinners, shall have received their infinite consummation; is that he will be all in all. God the infinite Spirit whose essence is one: God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three Persons in one Substance: God will be all in all, with reference to the consummation of this Eternal Covenant—and to all the effects of that consummation. It has been worked through with reference in a special manner, to the personal mode of the divine existence: its consummation is, in a special manner, unto the infinite unity of God. The Son delivers up the Kingdom—not in the sense of separating himself from it—but in the sense of having absolutely accomplished and perfected every part of the divine will, purpose, decree—every stipulation of the Eternal Covenant; more especially everything relating to God's elect who had been given to him in that covenant—of whose names there is the record in the Book of Life, which is delivered up with them. The covenant has perfectly accomplished that which it was the will of God it should accomplish; what remains is, that God is all in all—and that all his sons are like him: which, as to them, is going so high—that nothing seems to be higher, but the Godman. And herein, the glory of the Being, Perfections, Counsel, and Work of God, are complete. The Fall of man is retrieved: the Bride of the Lamb rejoices eternally: the universe receives from innumerable hosts of redeemed souls—true witness of God: all created things are purged from all defilement, delivered from all travail under the bondage of corruption, freed from the curse of God, and exulting under his blessing: all the enemies of God are shut up in hell forever. The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, have perfected grace, and caused it to be swallowed up in glory: and the end of all God's counsel and work in the promotion of his own declarative glory, and the highest blessedness of his created universe, is eternally accomplished. From eternity it was, God is all in all: to eternity it will be, God is all in all. Glorious manifestations of God are scattered all along the track of these eternal ages. Somewhere in the midst of them, begins this fearful episode of sin. Far along in their course, is this divine solution of it, with its threefold effect, of eternal glory to God, of boundless increase of the knowledge of him throughout his universe and everlasting blessedness thereby, and of endless perdition of Devils and damned spirits!

6. We must return, for a few moments, to sum up as well as we can in the present state of divine knowledge, the special relation of the divine Redeemer to that portion of the future career of his Church, which lies this side of that complete consummation of the covenant of Redemption, of which I have already spoken with reference to the chief matters involved therein. It is not as a question of prophecy,—but as a matter of Christian doctrine, that I make any statement here, upon the subject of the immediate connection of Christ with the future progress and coming glory of his Kingdom. As a question of mere doctrine, no reason can be assigned which tends to limit the period of the struggle between good and evil in this world, or to determine any positive issue of it. It is only by express revelation we could know that the Kingdom of God will triumph completely and possess the whole earth ; and I have already said that the Scriptures seem to me to teach, that in order to this triumph that Kingdom must assume a new form, and exist under another dispensation. Whoever will assert that the Church of God—independently of some divine change in the elements of the problem which it has been working out, under its Gospel form, for more than eighteen centuries—can have a future very materially different from her past history ; or that the human race can have a future spiritual history essentially variant from that which is past—without some further and marvellous interposition of God ; will, in each instance as it appears to me, contradict the whole current of divine revelation, and disregard the absolute œconomy of the Plan of Salvation. The augmentation of the present saving operation of the divine Spirit—is not that supernatural change in the elements of the problem, is not that further interposition of God, which will extinguish sin and misery in this world, and give to the saints their Millennial glory and reign with Christ. It is the second coming of the Son of Man, which is that change in the elements of the problem, that further interposition of God, which will give the victory. As to the fact that the glorified Redeemer would return again ; he declared it as distinctly as he did the fact that he would ascend to the Father, or the fact that he would send the Comforter : and not even his resurrection from the dead, is more thoroughly wrought into the system of Salvation disclosed in the Scriptures of the New Testament, than his second coming in infinite glory is. It is com-

monly alleged that this assured coming of the Lord is in his glory, and all his holy angels with him : and this is true, for it is repeatedly so declared in the Scriptures. Moreover, that the resurrection of the dead will occur at that time ; which is true, but not exactly in the sense generally understood : for it is expressly declared by the Apostle John that none but such as he describes will reign with Christ a thousand years, or have any part in the first resurrection—and that the rest of the dead live not again until the thousand years are finished : while it is as expressly declared by the Apostle Paul, that every one whose life is hid with Christ in God, shall appear in glory with Christ, when he appears, and that this appearing of Christ is his descent from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God—at which the dead in Christ shall rise. Again, that the instantaneous change of the saints then alive, will immediately follow the resurrection of the righteous dead—at the appearing of the Lord : which is true, according to the direct and repeated statements of Scripture. With regard to the wicked found alive at the coming of the Lord, the declaration is express, that when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, not only shall all kindreds of the earth wail because of him, but he will take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ : who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. Thus every class of men is disposed of: the righteous dead rise, and the living saints are transfigured—and all reign with Christ : the living wicked are destroyed—and the wicked dead live not again, till the thousand years are finished. And when Jesus was asked by the disciples, as he sat upon the mount of Olives, to tell them when the things of which he had been speaking in the Temple, should happen, and what should be the sign of his coming, and of the End of the World : he answered them as recorded by Matthew, at considerable length—and then pointed out particularly that as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be—and then illustrating the condition of his Kingdom at his coming, by the parable of the ten virgins, as before the condition of the world by the case of Noah, he closed the wonderful discourse

by a statement of his actual coming, and the actual gathering of all nations, and his treatment of the righteous and the wicked. I take this full and remarkable statement of the Lord, to be perfectly intelligible and conclusive upon many points which I need not recapitulate ; and, as it seems to me, it settles all question as to the whole race of mortals, good and bad, who are alive at his coming—and in the light of other Scriptures settles the question of the extinction of the mortal existence of the human race, during that Millennial Kingdom which flesh and blood cannot inherit, any more than corruption can inherit incorruption. It is after this glorious appearing of the Lord that he will judge the world in righteousness: and pronounce that final Sentence, which the promise of the Seed of the woman suspended. He will judge the quick and the dead. I suppose that what has just been stated, relates especially to the quick or living. Of the dead, all will rise—and all be judged. But as stated by Paul, every man will rise in his own order ; and the order is given. First Christ—the first-fruits ; more than eighteen centuries ago. Afterward they that are Christ's at his coming ; the day and hour of which coming, Christ repeatedly told his disciples, no man, not even the angels in heaven, not even the Son—but only the Father, knew ; and distinctly bade them, for that very reason, to watch and pray. Next in the divine order, is the end : before which is the reign of a thousand years—declared by John, which cannot end according to Paul, till Christ has put all enemies under his feet—the last of whom that shall be destroyed is death ; and at the end of which John assures us that Satan shall be loosed from the bottomless pit in which he had laid bound during the thousand years ; and the wicked dead shall rise to shame and everlasting contempt: and they and the Devil that deceived them, shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever, which is the second death ; which judgment and perdition of ungodly men, delayed since Messiah was first proclaimed, is the event and period as Peter asserts, unto which the heavens and the earth are kept in store, reserved unto fire—that day of God, after which the eternal heavenly state of the glorified saints will begin—and God be all in all. Surely there can be no doubt that the judgment of the just and the unjust, is directly connected with the second coming of the Son of

Man, whose resurrection is the assurance given by God to all men, that he will judge the world by him. I do not see that the Scriptures leave us any alternative, but to identify the judgment of the world by Chrst, with the Millennial reign of Christ: the resurrection of life—the resurrection of the just—the judgment of the saints and their reign, being altogether distinct from the resurrection of damnation—the resurrection of the unjust—the judgment and perdition of ungodly men. The judgment of the saints is not to ascertain their salvation, but to disclose and to proclaim the special grounds upon which each crown is given—the special manner in which each crown was won; all, to the infinite glory of the Lord—the unutterable joy of the redeemed. The Scriptures call it a day—but seem to declare the duration of it, to be a thousand years: I do not know whether literally, or whether each day of all those years, is a year itself, according to the prophetic manner. Along the line between the Gospel and Millennial dispensations—all those great and intricate questions, so hard to be satisfactorily and harmoniously expounded, will have their solution: the question of God's ancient people, the question of the great Apostasies of Rome and Mahomed, the question of heathenism, the question of the world-powers—and the like: concerning which it would be out of place to enlarge here. And as the resurrection, judgment, and reign of the saints with Christ—fill up the period of the New Heavens and the New Earth, so the resurrection, judgment, and perdition of the wicked, the passing away of the heavens, the burning up of the earth, and the melting of the elements with fervent heat—all lie along the line which separates the Millennial reign—from the eternal and heavenly state of the saints. The Word was from eternity and had an inbeing with God, and was God. But though he thought it no robbery to be equal with God, when he was in the form of God; yet being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and took the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God highly exalted him, and gave him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Nay God so exalted the risen Saviour as to seat him in his own throne, at the right hand of the

Majesty on high, gave him all power in heaven and on earth, and made him head over all things, as head of his Church which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. But Jesus himself called the throne on which he will sit, at his appearing, the throne of his glory ; and speaking from heaven, after his exaltation, said, To him that overcometh will I grant to sit down with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne : and his promise is express to make all his followers kings and priests unto God. Yet it is written that the Son himself becomes subject unto him that put all things under him, when the Kingdom is delivered up perfect, and God is all in all ; and the throne he has after that, is the throne he had as God, before his incarnation. It seems to follow, beyond doubt, that this Millennial throne, is the proper throne of the Mediator ; the one that he called *my throne*, when he was seated in the Father's throne—after his ascension ; the one he promised to share with every one that overcometh. In every point of view, therefore, the glory of the Messiah seems to be immediately and transcendently involved in his second coming and Millennial reign. And his loving and trusting children, ought to beware of dishonouring him and deadening their own high and spiritual hopes, by low and carnal allegorizing about these sublime mysteries ; as well as of deluding themselves by vain and shallow dogmatizing concerning them, as if they were perfectly simple and elemental. For myself, I speak concerning them after many years of anxious meditation, as one who would prefer not to speak, and who feels assuredly that they who will follow us, will get a clearer insight as they draw nearer to them. The grand and leading ideas which belong to the future progress and glorious consummation of God's eternal covenant, seem to me to be perfectly clear. Around these are other ideas, carrying with them apparently, the highest probability of truth, but not a satisfying assurance that we comprehend them justly. And then around these in circles perpetually enlarging, are topics vast and numerous, involving God, and man, and the universe, and questions the most intricate and overwhelming concerning them all ; in which a single inspired word misunderstood, or even a shade of thought wrongly conceived, may involve us far beyond our scanty knowledge and feeble powers. And how could it be otherwise ? It is the infinite and eternal thought of God, not yet realized in its actual accomplish-

ment, which mortals are striving to penetrate and disclose. Above all, they who conceive of the knowledge of God unto salvation, as a science of positive truth, are the last who ought to assert as of faith, anything which does not appear to be positively certain ; the last who ought to be willing to be held accountable for more than it is yet given to mortals to know—much less for the infinite breadth of knowledge which may still lie hid in the Word of God, and the infinite possibilities which may be realized in accordance with it.

7. The Son, as a Person of the Godhead, stands between the Father and the Spirit. With reference to the created universe, he so stands between it and the Father and the Spirit, that the existence of all created things is ascribed in a special manner to him. With regard to the infinite dominion and providence of God—his position is the same, and all power in heaven and in earth is given to him, as head of the Church. Touching the human race this position becomes so special, that a new name—Immanuel—is given to him, a new office—Mediator—is created for him—a new kingdom is erected for him as the Messiah—the Christ. The redeemed come to God, only through him as their Saviour : the damned perish forever under his sentence. Knowledge of this Saviour, is the immense want of humanity ; conformity to him, its immense necessity. Considered in this light, two convictions have grown upon me, throughout the whole of my Christian profession. The first is, that the extrication of the simple, living and glorious truth concerning Jesus and eternal life through him, and the presentation of it in its own perfect revealed proportion ; is the supreme means of all the good which the Church of God can accomplish on earth. The second is, that this is actually accomplished now, and probably has been accomplished in all ages, in the inward life of God's unknown children, and so in the aggregate life of his Church ; to a far higher degree, than is exhibited in the teachings of those who, in all ages, have appeared to men to be the instructors of the saints. If these convictions are just, how immense are the explanations they afford—the results to which they point !

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